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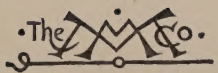

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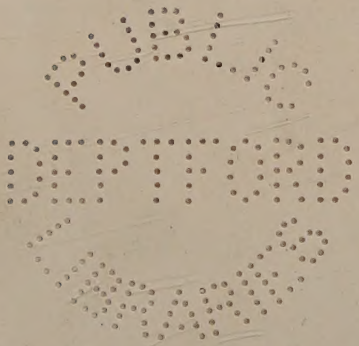
SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

1750–1850

BY

F. J. FOAKES JACKSON



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Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

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PREFACE

THIS volume contains a course of Lowell Lectures delivered in Boston in March, 1916; and I take this opportunity of tending my thanks to the Lowell Institute for affording me the privilege of delivering them. I must also thank a most indulgent audience for their sympathetic attention.

I desire particularly to thank several friends in England for assistance in the preparation of these lectures. In my investigations into the story of Margaret Catchpole, Mr. John Cobbold of Holywells, Ipswich, Mr. Edward Brooke of Ufford Hall, Suffolk, Mrs. Sylvester of Tonbridge, and the Curator of the Ipswich Museum, allowed me to see original documents of great interest; Mr. Barker of the *East Anglian Daily Times* and Mr. Goodwin of Ipswich helped by searching the files of old newspapers for information. The Downing Professor of the Laws

of England at Cambridge assisted with his advice on the subject of Dickens' legal knowledge; and Mr. Stoakley of the Cambridge chemical laboratory contributed to the success of the lectures by his admirable reproductions of illustrative maps and pictures.

Above all, I must express my gratitude to two ladies in America, who not only contributed to the pleasure of my visit by their unstinted hospitality, but did all in their power to save me from those pitfalls which beset every one who lectures in a strange country. Mrs. Barrett Wendell of Boston found time in the midst of her many useful avocations to hear several lectures before they were delivered, and to advise how they could be made more intelligible and acceptable to an American audience; and Mrs. Kirsopp Lake proved herself indefatigable not only in revising the lectures before they were delivered, but also in reading the proofs of this book.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
NEW YORK,
August, 1916.

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SOCIAL LIFE IN ENGLAND

LECTURE I

Life in the Eighteenth Century Illustrated by the Career of John Wesley

In order to depict social life in England in the eighteenth century I am going to take the career of one of its most remarkable men, though you may be surprised at the choice I have made. For the eighteenth century was an eminently social age and the stage is crowded with figures of men and women of the world. Their letters, their talk, their scandals, their amusements have come down to us in profusion; and it is not difficult for us to imagine ourselves in their midst. You may well ask me why I did not select a really brilliant character to expound the life of this time. I might for example have taken Lord Chesterfield or Horace Walpole, or Boswell,

that most observant of men, or the great character whom he immortalised. Or I might have selected others less known, but equally interesting, and rather than a revivalist preacher like John Wesley. I had written thus far when I came across the following words by the British man of letters, Mr. Birrell:

"How much easier to weave into your page the gossip of Horace Walpole, to enliven it with a heartless jest of George Selwyn, to make it blush with the sad stories of the extravagance of Fox, to embroider it with the rhetoric of Burke, to humanise it with the talk of Johnson, to discuss the rise and fall of administrations, the growth and decay of the constitution, than to follow John Wesley into the streets of Bristol, or to the bleak moors near Burslem, when he met face to face in all their violence, all their ignorance, and all their generosity the living men, women, and children, who made up the nation."

But I think I could give another reason why John Wesley is a fit person to represent the social life of his century, namely, that though he may undoubtedly be classed among the saints, though he was one of the most unworldly of men, though he took what must seem to most of us an unnecessarily serious view of life, he fell short of hardly any of the great men enumerated in shrewd observation and even in what in the language of his time would have been termed "wit." Nay, Wesley possessed a caustic humour which many a worldly wit might have envied. "Certainly," he writes in Scotland, "this is a nation quick to hear and slow to speak, though certainly not 'slow to wrath.'" "You cannot be too superficial in addressing a 'polite' audience" is an aphorism of his which I remember. "I know mankind too well, I know they that love you for political service, love you less than their dinner; and they that hate you, hate you worse than the

devil." Here is a criticism of a tapestry in Dublin. "In Jacob's vision you see, on the one side a little paltry ladder, and an angel climbing up it in the attitude of a chimney sweeper; and on the other side — Jacob staring at him under a silver laced hat." The criticisms of books, — for he was an omnivorous reader, especially on a journey, — "History, poetry and philosophy I commonly read on horseback, having other employment at other times," — are not always fair but nearly always shrewd and often as bitter as anything Johnson himself could have uttered. "I read with much expectation a celebrated book, Rousseau on Education. But how was I disappointed! Sure a more consummate coxcomb never saw the sun . . . I object to his temper even more than to his judgment: he is a mere misanthrope; a cynic all over. So indeed is his brother infidel Voltaire; and well nigh as great a coxcomb. But he hides his doggedness and vanity a little better;

whereas here it stares us in the face continually." Here is his opinion of a very famous book. "Tuesday, February 11, 1772, I casually took a volume of what is called, A sentimental Journey through France and Italy. Sentimental! What is that? It is not English: he might as well say Continental. It is not sense. It conveys no determinate idea: yet one fool makes many. And this nonsensical word (who would believe it?) is become a fashionable one! However the book agrees full well with the title; for one is as queer as the other. For oddity, uncouthness, and unlikeness to all the world beside, I suppose the writer is without a rival." "A book wrote with as much learning and as little judgment, as any I remember to have read in my whole life," he says of Cave's "Primitive Christianity." Despite the fact, therefore, that John Wesley was devoted to the work of missionary preaching, that he was an ecstatic visionary and in many respects

the most credulous as well as the most zealous of evangelists, his knowledge of men and critical power was not a little remarkable.

I am not at all sure that sinners are not the right people to write about saints. Saints may be; because sanctity implies something attractive which is almost unthinkable without the sympathy which nearly always reveals itself in a certain playfulness. But good, deserving people are assuredly not qualified to be the biographers of saints; for, in their desire to exalt their hero, they generally strip him of all the qualities for which men loved him (and no one was ever loved for his perfections alone) and present him as their own ideal of what a saint should be. John Wesley is an example of this and he would appear in a far more amiable light in pages written by a kindly man of the world than in a book by a devoted admirer and would-be imitator of his virtues. It was, after all, Boswell's many failings which contrib-

uted to give us so delightful a portrait as that of his great and good friend, Samuel Johnson.

Now John Wesley was an undoubted saint, and the good he did in England, and his society in America for that matter, is incalculable: but I ask his admirers and any who profess to follow him to forgive me for using him as a peg on which to hang a few remarks on social England. Before, however, I do so may I introduce him and some of his family to you?

It is rare indeed to find in any family so much genius transmitted from father to son for more than two centuries as there was in that of the Wesleys. Here are six generations:

1. Bartholomew studied physic at the University and, when ejected for Puritanism in 1662 from the living of Allington in Dorsetshire, he practised as a doctor.

2. His son John was an ardent Puritan,

imprisoned on no less than four occasions. He died at an early age and was distinguished when at New Inn Hall at Oxford for his proficiency in Oriental studies.

3. Samuel, Rector of Epworth, a scholar of some repute and father of the famous Wesleys.

4. Charles, the poet of Methodism.

5. Samuel, the musician, one of the pioneers of modern organ playing.

6. Samuel Sebastian, the celebrated composer, organist in Gloucester Cathedral, who died in 1875.

Talent, not without eccentricity, seemed the natural gift of this remarkable family, to which was added beauty in the females and distinction of appearance in the male members. Samuel, the third on our list, was, naturally, a puritan by upbringing; but he became a Churchman by conviction. He obtained the Rectory of Epworth in the Isle of Axholm in Lincolnshire, and the chaplaincy of a regiment. This, however, he lost; and

his dissenting enemies stopped his getting any further preferment save the living of Wroote, near to Epworth. He married the daughter of an ejected minister, Susannah Annesley, who was herself connected with the noble family of that name. She had no less than nineteen children, but few of these survived, among them the three famous brothers Samuel, John, and Charles. The girls, had they had their brother's advantages and education, might have been almost equally distinguished. As it was, however, Samuel had enough to do to give his sons an education worthy of their abilities. The eldest son Samuel was a scholar of Westminster and a student of Christ Church, a friend of Bishop Atterbury, and a sound scholar. Owing to his Toryism he was never more than an usher (under-master) at Westminster and Master of Tiverton School: and he continued to hold the principles of a High Churchman to the last. He was an excellent and affectionate brother,

ready to help John and Charles in their education; but from the first he recognised the tendencies of Methodism to be schismatical; and in a letter to his mother just before his death he pointed out the danger of his brothers' teaching. Because he was not in sympathy with the movement he has been condemned as "worldly," as dull, as without genius; but a sentence in this letter reveals something of the incisiveness of John. "As I told Jack," he writes, "I am not afraid that the church should excommunicate him, discipline is at too low an ebb; but that he should excommunicate the church." John went to school at the Charterhouse, thence to Christ Church, Oxford, and to a fellowship at Lincoln College. Charles followed in the footsteps of Samuel and became a student of Christ Church. Academic distinction was the lot of all the sons of the Rector of Epworth.

The home of the family was amid the fens

of Lincolnshire; and the fenland had still many of its peculiar characteristics during the childhood and youth of the Wesleys. The Isle of Axholm had been but recently literally an island, rising out of the swamps and often approached only by boat. These islands were inhabited by a wild uncouth race who lived partly as farmers, and partly by capturing the fish and birds which swarmed in the surrounding fens. Here lived John Wesley and his family. By birth they were emphatically gentlefolk, by education highly cultivated; they were miserably poor, severed from the society of their equals among a people with whom they could have but little sympathy. All of a deeply religious spirit; the father a pious and conscientious but disappointed scholar, the mother sternly determined to do her duty, the sons endowed with singular gifts of leadership, the daughters sensitive and refined, condemned to live as peasant girls. A family so able, so thrown

on its own resources, so out of contact with the world, of so imperious a spirit, was almost bound to develop on exceptional lines. Their virtues and their strength were as abnormal as their weakness, their singularly active minds were equally capable of the greatest deeds and the most surprising mistakes. All the girls were unfortunate in the choice of their partners and had sad lives. John, the most gifted of all this gifted household, was able to transform England by his preaching; yet made the most astonishing blunders in the conduct of his private life, though shewing a talent for administration worthy of his celebrated namesake, Arthur Wesley, or Wellesley, Duke of Wellington. In studying the movement we must always keep Epworth in the background.[1] But there was another side of the life of the sons of the Rector.

[1] To shew how inaccessible Epworth must have been, I may mention that when I went there in an automobile, the sides of the roads were pointed out to me as paved so as to make a mule track about three feet in width.

Samuel's friend Atterbury, the Tory Bishop of Rochester, is one of the most remarkable figures of his age. John and Charles at Oxford were poor enough but found a welcome in society congenial to them. Their birth and manners gave them access to a coterie of religious yet cultured circles, especially at Stanton in Gloucestershire; and they always comported themselves with a consciousness of a perfectly secure position in society. Neither of them was in the slightest degree dazzled by rank, wealth, or worldly position. When Count Zinzendorf, the great German noble, and the patron of the Moravians, spoke with the authority of a pious prince to John, he was answered in a spirit as uncompromising as his own. Selina, the famous and pious Countess of Huntingdon, "the elect lady" of evangelical preachers, might patronise Whitefield; but could not take a high tone with the Wesleys. Indeed, the aristocracy who preferred the treasure of the Gospel to be

contained in clergy, who might be described as "earthen vessels," disliked the Wesleys, whose greatest successes were obtained among the middle class. None the less their influence was in a measure due to the social advantages which they had enjoyed when Oxford students. We, however, have to do with John Wesley as illustrating the England of his day, and we may well begin to use him for our purposes as a traveller. He had been one the greater part of his life; but a good starting point for us will be after his visit to Germany in 1738, immediately after the time from which he dates his conversion. From that day almost till his death in 1791, John Wesley was almost continually on the road, preaching from town to town wherever he could get a hearing.

For years he seems to have travelled constantly on horseback, but later in life he made use of a postchaise. The distances he covered are almost incredible. Here is an ex-

tract from his Journal, dated August 7, 1759, when he was in his fifty fourth year. "After preaching at four (because of the harvest) I took horse and rode easily to London. *Indeed I wanted a little rest;* having rode in seven months about four and twenty hundred miles." As we have seen, Wesley often read as he rode, and this practice taught him the value of a slack rein. "I asked myself How is it no horse stumbles when I am reading? No account can possibly be given but this: because I throw the reins on his back. I then set myself to observe; and I aver that in riding about an hundred thousand miles I scarce remember any horse (except two that would fall head over heels anyway) to fall or to make a considerable stumble while I rode with a slack rein. To fancy, therefore, that a tight rein prevents stumbling is a capital blunder. I have repeated the trial more than most men in the kingdom can do. A slack rein will prevent stum-

bling if anything will. But in some horses nothing can." But all his rides were not so leisurely, and I will read you an account of a ride in Wales. He started from Shrewsbury at 4 A.M., and at two in the afternoon was forty two or three miles off, preaching in the marketplace at Llanidloes. He and his companions then rode to Fountainhead where he hoped to lodge; but "Mr. B. being unwilling" they remounted at 7 P.M. and rode on to Ross-fair. They missed the track and found themselves at the edge of a bog and had to be put on the right road; again they missed their way, "it being half past nine." They did not find Ross-fair till between 11 and 12. When they were in bed the ostler and a miner had a ride on their beasts, and in the morning Wesley found his mare "bleeding like a pig" in the stable, with a wound behind. This was on July 24; on the 27th he was at Pembroke; "I rested that night, having not quite recovered my

journey from Shrewsbury to Ross-fair." He was in his 62d year! The dangers of travel were considerable, and one of the most remarkable facts in regard to Wesley was that he was never molested by highwaymen, who literally swarmed in England throughout the eighteenth century. They were often in league with the post boys, many of whom were highwaymen themselves. When Wesley was 76 years of age he writes: "Just at this time there was a combination among many of the postchaise drivers on the Bath road, especially those that drove by night, to deliver their passengers into each other's hands. One driver stopped at the spot they had appointed, where another waited to attack the chaise. In consequence of this many were robbed; but I had a good Protector still. I have travelled all roads by day or by night for these forty years, and never was interrupted yet." Four years later, in 1782, he writes: "About one on Wednesday morn-

ing we were informed that three highwaymen were on the road and had robbed all the coaches that had passed, some within an hour or two. I felt no uneasiness on this account, knowing that God would take care of us: and He did so; for before we came to the spot all the highwaymen were taken." I cannot but think it remarkable that Wesley was never molested, because, especially in his early days of itinerancy, everything was done to hinder his work and his enemies were quite unscrupulous enough to set the highwaymen on him. Perhaps the highwaymen had their scruples! In the early days of Wesley's mission the invasion of England by the forces of the young Pretender took place. This was the period at which he and his followers suffered most from mob violence and also from charges of Popery and disaffection. I will take the latter first, as there is hardly any feature in the 18th century so marked in England as the dread and horror

with which the Roman Catholic religion was regarded. I remember a few years ago examining a number of cartoons and caricatures during the rebellion of 1745 and almost every one of them had to do with Popery. To the English the invasion of the country by Charles Edward was like the Spanish Armada, an attempt to impose the papal yoke on the land. In the trinity of the nation's enemies the Pope stood first: "From the Pope, the Devil and the Pretender, Good Lord, deliver us." It was hatred of Rome that completely blinded people's eyes to the romance of the young prince's enterprise, and to his undoubted claim to the throne. Neither the government nor the sovereign were popular; but it was no question of popularity where Popery was concerned. The House of Hanover stood for Protestantism and the nation rallied to its support. Even that rapacious and cynical infidel, Frederick the Great of Prussia, was the darling

of England as the "Protestant Hero"; and the Duke of Cumberland's cruelties were forgotten because he saved England from the Pope. Like Marlborough and Wellington he was known as "the Great Duke."

No charge could be more effective against an opponent than that of Romanism and many good men had to endure it. The great Bishop Butler was exposed to it for complaining in his visitation charge to the clergy of Durham of the disgraceful neglect into which they had allowed their fabrics to fall. The most deadly shaft levelled against John Wesley was Bishop Lavington of Exeter's book, "The enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared." The visions, the trances, the ecstasies of the Methodists, reminded good Protestants of such Catholic mystics as St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. The reasonableness of Protestantism, whether Anglican or nonconformist, was contrasted with the excited

and hysterical manifestation of religious fervour in Popish countries, and the fervour of the Wesleys and their followers was especially unpopular on this account. The furious hatred of anything approaching Romanism is the key to much of the thought and feeling of the age. But though undoubtedly an enthusiast, Wesley was far in advance of his age as regards toleration. He had, moreover, a curious and chivalrous regard for the memory of Mary Queen of Scots; and he considered Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen and Protestant champion, as little better than a royal criminal. He at least would never have said as Puff says in *The Critic*, "Hush! no scandal against Queen Elizabeth." On the contrary, he says in his Journal, "But what then was Queen Elizabeth? As just and merciful as Nero, and as good a Christian as Mahomet." Thus he wrote in 1768, and if he held such a view twenty three years earlier, no wonder he was suspected of Jacobitism and Popery.

Far more to his credit is the fact that he resolutely refused to indulge in violent abuse of the ancient Church. On the contrary, he found so little true religion anywhere that wherever it was manifested he welcomed it. Charles Wesley's son went over to the Church of Rome, to the great grief of his parents and, possibly, to the scandal of Methodism. This is how John writes and his words are so remarkable that I quote them at some length.

"He has not changed his religion; he has changed his *opinions* and *mode of worship*, but that is not *religion*. . . . He has suffered unspeakable loss because his new opinions are unfavourable to religion. . . . What then is religion. It is happiness in God or in the knowledge and love of God. It is faith working by love producing righteousness and peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost. In other words, it is a heart and life devoted to God. . . . Now either he has this religion

or he has not: if he has, he will not finally perish, notwithstanding the absurd unscriptural opinions he has embraced . . . let him only have his right faith . . . and he is quite safe. He may indeed roll a few years in purging fire but he will surely go to heaven at last."

No wonder, therefore, considering the bigotry of his age, that Wesley was exposed to persecution by the mobs: but his leniency towards Romanism was not the only cause of this. To-day, however, I wish to utilize the story of the attacks made on the Methodists to shew the state of the country. Mob law was powerful wherever population was dense. Towns were gradually growing up and the English system of legal machinery was devised rather for a rural population. There was no police properly so called. Shakespeare's Dogberry and Verges would not have been caricatures in the 18th century. Wesley himself speaks of the watch-

men as "those poor fools." The violence of the mob was a feature of the 18th century in England. Perhaps you may recollect Hogarth's picture of the chairing of a member of Parliament after an election, — the man laying about him with a flail, the prize-fights, etc. Riots play an important part in the history of the time and the no-popery riot in 1780 when Lord George Gordon stirred up the fanaticism of the London mob is only one of many similar occurrences. Never did the brothers Wesley, John and Charles, shew the courage of good breeding more conspicuously than when they faced an infuriated rabble and saved themselves and their followers by the dignity of their demeanour and the fearlesss mildness of their conduct amid scenes of tumult. Witness the affair at Wednesbury and Walsall. The mob dragged John Wesley from one magistrate to another. Some tried to protect him but were overpowered. To quote the Journal: "To

attempt speaking was vain; for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till they came to the town where seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in; but a man catching me by the hair pulled me back into the middle of the mob. . . . I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling neither pain nor weariness. . . I stood at the door (of a shop) and asked 'Are you willing to hear me speak?' Many cried out 'No, no, knock his brains out, kill him at once, etc.' . . . In the mean time my strength and voice returned and I broke out aloud in prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob, turned, and said, Sir I will spend my life for you: follow me and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head." Throughout the riot Wesley notices: "From first to last I heard none give me a reviling word, or call me by any opprobrious name; but the cry of one and all was

"The Preacher! the Parson! the Minister!" A man rushed at him to strike him but paused and merely stroked his head, saying, "Why, what soft hair he has!" In Cornwall attempts were made to stop Methodism by calling in the aid of the Press-Gang. Thomas Maxfield was caught and offered to the captain of a ship in Mount's Bay, who refused to take him. An attempt was actually made to press John Wesley. A clergyman, Dr. Borlase, acted in his magisterial capacity to further this infamous project. But a Mr. Eustick who was charged with executing the warrant had the sense to see the indecency of arresting such a man to serve in the navy as a common seaman. He conducted Mr. Wesley to Dr. Borlase's door and told him he had done his duty and that his prisoner was free to depart. Wesley's description of the event is characteristic. Mr. Eustick was visited by him in order to be taken to Dr. Borlase's to be pressed into the army.

"I went thither, and asked, 'Is Mr. Eustick here?' After some pause one said 'Yes'; and he showed me into the parlour. When he came down he said 'O Sir will you be so good as to go with me to the doctor's?' I answered 'Sir I came for that purpose.' 'Are you ready Sir,' I answered, 'Yes.' 'Sir I am not quite ready, in a little time, in a quarter of an hour I will call upon you.' In about three quarters of an hour he came and finding that there was no remedy, he called for his horse and put forward to Dr. Borlase's house; but he was in no haste so we were an hour and a quarter riding three or four measured miles. As soon as he came into the yard he asked a servant, 'Is the Doctor at home' upon whose answering 'No Sir he is gone to Church;' he presently said 'Well Sir I have executed my commission. I have done Sir; I have no more to say.'"

Not that Wesley was not in serious danger at times, especially in Cornwall. Once at

Falmouth the house was filled with privateersmen. Only a wainscot partition separated him from the mob. "Indeed to all appearances our lives were not worth an hour's purchase." When the door was broken down he came forth bareheaded ("For I purposely left off my hat that they all might see my face"). His calmness saved him; for though countless hands were lifted up to strike or throw at him yet they were "one and all stopped in the midway so that I had not even a speck of dirt on my clothes!" Ferocious as were the British mobs of this period they were capable of generous sentiments and chivalrous admiration for courage. The people were often set on Wesley by the gentry and, to their shame be it said, by some of the clergy. The excuse, both in Cornwall in 1745 and in Newcastle, was that the Methodist societies were with the Pretenders. "All the gentlemen in these parts say," Wesley was told, "that you have been a long time in France and Spain,

and are now set hither by the Pretender; and that these societies are to join him."

It is scarcely necessary to do more than allude to the extreme brutality of the amusements of people in England in the eighteenth century. Dog fighting, bear baiting, bull baiting, cock fighting, were universal and, as we may see from Hogarth's pictures, cruelty to animals was universal. On one occasion a baited bull was turned loose to interrupt a congregation assembled to hear Wesley preach. One of the ringleaders of the mob at Walsall who ended by taking the part of the Methodists was a noted prize-fighter in a bear garden.

John and Charles Wesley began their religious labours at Oxford in the city prison, Bocardo, ministering to the prisoners, and the Journal throws a lurid light on the condition of felons, criminals, and debtors in England. The system was atrocious, there was no real control; and the jailers farmed the

place and made what they could out of it. The result was that if a man paid he could do what he liked in jail; and, if he could not, he was treated just as his keepers pleased. Side by side, therefore, with the utmost squalor and misery was almost indescribable profligacy. "I visited the Marshalsea prison," writes Wesley, "on February 3, 1753, a nursery of all manner of wickedness. O shame to man that there should be such a place, such a picture of hell upon earth! And shame to those who bear the name of Christ that there should need any prison at all in Christendom." Let me quote an extract from a letter to the London Chronicle, Friday, Jan. 2, 1761, "Sir, of all the seats of woe on this side hell, few, I suppose, exceed or equal Newgate. If any region of horror could exceed it, a few years ago Newgate in Bristol did; so great was the filth, the stench, the misery and wickedness which shocked all who had a spark of humanity left."

The prison at Bristol had been reformed by a good keeper, who, says Wesley, "deserves to be remembered full as well as the man of Ross." It was clean, there was no drunkenness nor brawling, no immorality, no idleness, and a decent service in the chapel. These reforms themselves shew what most prisons of the time must have been like.

Another evil was smuggling: wherever a boat could land there was a conspiracy to defraud the revenue. The business, for it was nothing else, was run on the most extensive scale and the whole countryside was engaged in it. The smugglers were armed and disciplined and prepared to offer furious resistance to the officers of the Revenue. Wesley set his face sternly against the practice.

"The stewards met at St. Ives, from the western part of Cornwall. The next day I began examining the society; but I was soon obliged to stop short. I found an

accursed thing among them; well nigh one and all bought and sold 'uncustomed' goods. I therefore delayed speaking to any more till I had met them all together. This I did in the evening and told them plain, either they must put this abomination away or they would see my face no more."

This was in November, 1753. In June, 1757, Wesley was in the north at Sunderland.

"I met the Society and told them plain, none could stay with us, unless he would part with all sin; particularly robbing the King, selling or buying run goods; which I would no more suffer than robbing on the highway."

In 1762 he is able to record of Cornwall:

"The detestable practice of cheating the King (smuggling) is no more found in our societies, and since the accursed thing has been put away, the work of God has everywhere increased."

The Cornish practice of "wrecking" still

continued and in 1776 Wesley writes, "I was afterwards inquiring if that scandal in Cornwall of plundering wrecked vessels still continued." He was told that it was as great as ever and only the Methodists would not share in it. Wesley remarks, with his usual good sense when dealing with a practical matter, "The Gentry of Cornwall may totally prevent it whenever they please. Only let the law take its course and the plundering will stop. Even if every labourer or tinner (*i.e.* tin miner) guilty of it were to be discharged and his name advertised to prevent his getting respectable employment, there would be no more of it." In his peregrination Wesley did not disdain to visit and to note in his Journal objects of curiosity and interest. His active mind could not help occupying itself with anything exceptional, and many a traveller with nothing to do but investigate the locality has seen much less than he. Here is his description of how

apprentices were made free of the corporation of Alnwick:

"Sixteen or seventeen, we were informed, were to receive their freedom this day, and in order thereto (such is the unparalleled wisdom of the present corporation, as well as of their forefathers), to walk through a great bog (purposely preserved for the occasion; otherwise it might have been drained long ago), which takes some of them to the neck, and many of them to the breast."

A few months later he is in the south near Carisbrooke Castle, whither he walked in the afternoon.

"It stands upon a solid rock upon the top of an hill and commands a beautiful prospect. There is a well in it, cut quite through the rock, said to be seventy two yards deep, and another in the citadel, near an hundred. They drew up the water by an ass, which they assured us was sixty years old. But all the stately appartments lie in ruins. Only

just enough of them is left to shew the chamber where poor King Charles was confined, and the windows through which he attempted to escape."

From the steeple of Glasgow Cathedral Wesley surveys the country.

"A more fruitful and better cultivated plain is scarce to be seen in England. Indeed nothing is wanted but more trade (which would naturally bring more people) to make a great part of Scotland in no way inferior to the best counties in England."

When he came to Edinburgh he was not so pleased with the High Street. "The situation of the city, on a hill shelving down on both sides, as well as to the east is inexpressibly fine. And the main street so broad and finely paved, with lofty houses on either side (many of them seven or eight stories high), is far beyond any in Great Britain. But how can it be suffered that all manner of filth should be thrown even into this

street continually? Where are the magistracy, the gentry, the nobility of the land? Have they no concern for the honour of their nation? How long shall the capital city of Scotland, yea, and the chief street of it stink worse than a common sewer? Will no lover of this country, or of decency and common-sense find a remedy for it?"

On one occasion he went to the Tower of London, where lions used to be kept, with a man who played the German flute to see whether music had any influence on animals. The lions rose up and came to the front of the den and seemed all attention. A tiger started up and began continually leaping over and crawling under a lion. Wesley asks "Can we account for this by any principle of mechanism? can we account for it at all?" At Carn Brae in Cornwall he admires the Druidical remains. At Windsor he views the improvements of that "active and useful man the Duke of Cumberland,"

especially the triangular tower built at the edge of Windsor Park. Here also he visited the house of a lover of the antique, "The oddest I ever saw with my eyes. Everything breathes antiquity; scarce a bedstead is to be seen that is not an hundred and fifty years old; and everything is out of the common way: for six hours I suppose these oddities would much delight a curious man; but after six months they would probably give him no more pleasure than a collection of feathers." When he was eighty we find him in Holland delighted with the country and its people and his reception by Madam de Wassenaar. "She received us with that easy openness and affability which is almost peculiar to persons of quality." The great hall in the Staat haus at Amsterdam reminds him of his old College hall at Christ Church, it is "near as large."

It is a temptation to me to multiply examples of how the great preacher illustrates the

country, every way of which was familiar to him. After his long journeyings no man of his time could have known England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland better. Few, with all our facilities of travel, know it half as well. Much of it was wild and almost uninhabited. Some of the roads were enough to daunt the hardiest of travellers. On one occasion the road to Ely for a mile and a half was under water. The chaise found the roads impassable near St. Ives, so Wesley borrowed a horse and rode forward till the ground was completely under water. Then he borrowed a boat "full twice as large as a kneading-trough." He was seventy two years old at this time! So wild were parts of the island that John Haine, a disciple of Wesley, relates that he once saw what he supposed to be a supernatural appearance in the clear sky, "a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black and part brown, which flew at him, went just over his head, and lighting

on the ground stood staring upon him." This was undoubtedly a great bustard, and Southey in his "Life of Wesley" quotes the *Gentleman's Magazine* to shew that one was seen as late as 1801. As we have seen, the very people of this time seem almost as unfamiliar to us as the scenery would have been. But is it not strange that with a guide whose thoughts were almost entirely in the world to come we should have seen so much and could see so much more, if only we could study him more closely? He lays bare to us England during the very long and active life of a man born just after the death of William III, who saw George III thirty years and more upon the throne. Wesley might have heard of the peace of Utrecht in 1713 as a boy, of the South Sea Bubble in 1720 as a youth, and he lived to hear of the French Revolution in 1789 and the fall of the Bastille. And throughout this long period of time the remarkable thing is his

amazing vitality. He says he never felt low spirited: a sleepless night is so unusual that it is specially commented on. Till his 85th year he never acknowledged that he felt old: his youthfulness surprised him when recording his eighty eighth and following birthdays. No man had therefore a greater opportunity for seeing what England was like; and Wesley used it to the full. Yet it is a strange and perhaps an original guide whom we have used and it may be that the impression he leaves upon your minds is not quite what I had designed. Suppose my lecture should have been to some of you like the sermon of which George Herbert writes, "Where all lack sense, God takes the text and preaches patience;" and, my listeners, you have surrendered yourselves to your own thoughts and dreams. You may have pictured in the England of the eighteenth century a moorland on a windy winter evening, and on the near horizon the glare of an ill-lit

manufacturing town, and a single figure small and slight, his long gray hair falling over his shoulders, sitting on a tired horse plodding forward with loosened rein. It is a subject the genius of a Millet might have made as memorable as his famous "Angelus," — the two peasants praying as they hear the bell across the damp fields at even. And your dream, vision, picture, call it what you will, would be no less an adequate clue to the meaning of that famous age, than would some of the most stirring scenes in the history of Great Britain in those thrilling times. For in a sense John Wesley expressed the spirit of many thousands of its people.

LECTURE II

GEORGE CRABBE

I HAVE chosen the subject of George Crabbe, the Suffolk poet, partly out of attachment to the county of my birth, but also because I have certain faint though undoubted family links in connection with him.[1] In addition to this, his character, as a man as well as a poet, has a certain attraction for me; and even though there has been a revival of interest in him, comparatively few have studied him, or are acquainted with the facts of his life. Crabbe, however, was singularly fortunate in having a son, possessed of many valuable qualities as a biographer,

[1] My father's first cousin, the Ven. Robert Groome, Archdeacon of Suffolk, the intimate friend of Edward Fitzgerald, was the grandson of a native of Aldeburgh who owned the *Unity* smack in which Crabbe sailed to London in 1780. My maternal great-grandparents, as will appear, also knew the poet.

for not only was he affectionate, and extraordinarily proud of his father, but at the same time he was not blind to his defects as a man or as a writer. And it must be remembered that Crabbe at his death occupied a place in public estimation, together with Scott and Byron; that the latter had described him as "Nature's sternest painter and the best," and had written of him, "Crabbe, the first of living poets." A son, therefore, who under such circumstances could refrain from indiscriminating eulogy of a beloved father just after his death must be a man to be trusted.

George Crabbe was born in 1754 at Aldeburgh, a somewhat squalid little fishing town on the coast of Suffolk, rejoicing, however, in the dignity of a corporation, and returning two members to Parliament. His father was saltmaster and general *factotum* of the borough; a man, to all appearances, of rough manners, not improved by unfor-

tunate circumstances; but sufficiently intelligent to recognise that in George he had a son who would repay a good education.[1] Not that with his narrow means he could do much; but he certainly did his best, and more than could be expected. George was intended for the medical profession; and it may be of interest to hear how a boy was educated to be a doctor in the eighteenth century. Young Crabbe was sent to school at Bungay, where he remained till his eleventh or twelfth year. He was next sent to a Mr. Richard Haddon at Stowmarket, where he showed considerable aptitude for mathematics, in which his father was also proficient. His master, to quote the biography, "though neither a Porson nor a Parr, laid the foundations of a fair classical education also." But he soon had to return home and had to work in the warehouse of Slaughden Quay, piling

[1] One cannot fail to recall Horace's generous acknowledgement of the liberality of his father, "macro pauper agello," in sending him to Rome to be educated. *Sat.* I. vi. 71.

up butter and cheese, duties which the poor boy — he was but thirteen, and was of a dreamy, meditative temperament — bitterly resented. But his father had not forgotten that George was to be a doctor, and seeing an advertisement, "Apprentice Wanted," he sent him to Wickhambook, near Bury St. Edmunds. There he was treated as a mere drudge, slept with the ploughboy, worked on the farm, and learned his profession apparently by delivering medicine bottles to the neighbouring villages. In 1771, he removed to Woodbridge as apprentice to a Mr. Page, where he pursued his studies under more favourable circumstances. Here it was he met his future bride, Miss Elmy, at the neighbouring village of Parham, won a prize poem in the *Lady's Magazine* owned by a Mr. Wheble, on the subject of "Hope"; and later he published at Ipswich a poem entitled "Inebriety," in the preface of which he apologises "for those parts wherein I

have taken such great liberties with Mr. Pope." And it was certainly to Pope that Crabbe owed his inspiration. Now to imitate Pope's versification is easy, and to copy his mannerisms not impossible; but to gain a double portion of his spirit, to emulate his epigrammatic terseness, above all to acquire anything like his knowledge of life and human nature can only be done by a man who is even in a measure akin to him in genius. Whether Crabbe was, it must be our endeavour to decide.

"Inebriety" did not catch on in Suffolk, a land which bears the epithet "silly" in two senses. I prefer the one which alludes to its numerous churches, "selig," or pious. At any rate, no young author could expect an appreciative audience of clerics when he wrote thus:

"Lo proud Flaminius at the splendid board,
The easy chaplain of an atheist lord,
Quaffs the bright juice with all the gust of sense,
And clouds his brain in torpid elegance."

Crabbe completed his apprenticeship in 1775 and once more returned to Aldeburgh. His family circumstances were extremely distressed, his father had changed for the worse, and his mother's health had broken down. Again he was compelled to act as a warehouseman at Slaughden Quay. He managed to get to London for a short time, nominally to walk the hospitals; but having no funds he had, as he expresses it, to "pick up a little surgical knowledge as cheap as he could." After ten months' privation, Crabbe returned to Aldeburgh to become the assistant of a surgeon-apothecary, named Maskill,[1] who had opened a shop in the borough, and on his retirement Crabbe, though "imperfectly grounded in the commonest details of his profession," set up for himself. His medical career was a complete failure. He had not the requisite knowledge and lacked

[1] In the "Life" by his son it is implied that Crabbe was Maskill's assistant; but this is denied in Huchon's "George Crabbe and his Times," p. 63.

means to acquire it, nor was he able to adapt himself to the rough surroundings amid which he lived. Aldeburgh was peopled, to quote his own words, by —

> "A wild amphibious race
> With sullen woe expressed on every face,
> Who far from civil acts and social fly,
> And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye."

Sneered at as a poor and useless scholar by the relatives of Miss Elmy, to whom he was now engaged, regarded as a failure by his rough but not ungenerous father, Crabbe's life was far from happy; the only relaxation he found was in the study of botany, and the only encouragement in the society of the officers of the Warwickshire militia, who were for a time quartered in the town. Their colonel, General Conway, showed the young surgeon attention, and gave him some valuable Latin books on botany. At last, wearied and disgusted with his life, Crabbe gave up attempting to be a doctor; and, aided by a

loan of five pounds from Mr. Dudley North, brother to the candidate for the borough, he made his way to London in 1780 as a literary adventurer.[1]

The early struggles of a man who has won literary fame are only of importance in so far as they affect his subsequent work. Crabbe's intellect was essentially scientific rather than imaginative. His poetry is, like Dutch art, remarkable for the finish of details and for exactness of observation. It is the same when he depicts what he saw as when he describes emotions and feelings. He had to understand before he could write. His hobby, as we have seen, was botany: he first showed talent as a mathematician; nor, because he failed in his medical work, need we suppose that his want of success was due in any way to intellectual deficiencies.

[1] So the "Life." Huchon points out that his name at this time was Long, and that he subsequently assumed the name of North. Crabbe went to London on the *Unity* smack, the property of Robinson Groome, grandfather of Archdeacon Groome, the intimate friend of E. Fitzgerald. Huchon, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Place Crabbe in a different situation. Suppose him to have walked the hospitals of London or Edinburgh, and to have made his way as a physician. He might well have taken an honoured place among the scientific men of his age. But look at the facts. His training was hardly better than that of an assistant in a chemist's store in the most remote village nowadays. This, for example, was the hospital which Crabbe had "walked":

"Such is that room which one rude beam divides,
And naked rafters form the sloping sides;
* * *
Here on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head.
* * *
But soon a loud and hasty summons calls,
Shakes the thin roof, and echoes round the walls,
* * *
Anon a figure enters, quaintly neat,
All pride and business, bustle and conceit.
* * *
A potent quack, long versed in human ills,
Who first insults the victim whom he kills;
Whose murderous hand a drowsy Bench protect,
And whose most tender mercy is neglect." [1]

[1] "The Village."

We see the influence of Pope in the versification; but of personal experience in the subject.

True, Crabbe detested his profession, and thus apostrophises medical books as —

"Ye frigid tribe, on whom I wasted long
The tedious hours, and ne'er indulged in song;
Ye first seducers of my easy heart,
Who promised knowledge ye could not impart."

But for all this, when in later life as a clergyman he used to prescribe for his poorer parishioners, he seems to have shown a power of diagnosis which made it evident that, though he failed as a surgeon apothecary, he might, had he had the requisite education, have succeeded as a consulting physician.[1]

Because he took Holy Orders and won his fame as a poet while a clergyman, Crabbe's experiences, on which he founded his rhymed tales — for such his poems really are — are considered to have been mainly clerical.

[1] In the "Life" Crabbe is said to have prescribed for his parishioners at Muston with great success.

But, to understand him aright, we must remember that he was more or less engaged in the practice of medicine from the age of fourteen to that of twenty-five. It would be easy to quote many lines wherein the doctor and not the parson is revealed, and he never lost the professional dislike of quacks or contempt of valetudinarians.

Let us now consider how Crabbe's experiences of Aldeburgh appear in his poems. I will take most of my extracts from his early poem, "The Village," but a few will be from "The Borough," which did not appear till more than twenty years later.

In "The Village" Crabbe boldly asks:

> "From Truth and Nature shall we widely stray,
> Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads the way?"

and declines to follow the fashion of speaking of rural life as the height of felicity. He says:

> "I grant indeed that fields and flocks have charms
> For him that grazes or for him that farms;

But when amid such pleasing scenes I trace
The poor laborious natives of the place.
* * *
Then shall I dare these real ills to hide
In tinsel trappings of poetic pride?"

In this spirit he describes the barren coast of East Suffolk, not then the haunt of the holiday-maker and the golfer, but the battle-ground of the smuggler and the preventive men, the home of —

"A bold and artful, surly, savage race,
Who only skilled to take the finny tribe,
The yearly dinner, or septennial bribe;
Wait on the shore, and, as the waves run high,
On the tossed vessel bend their eager eye,
Which to the coast directs its venturous way,
Theirs, or the ocean's miserable prey."

This description of the barren land about the coast well illustrates Crabbe's power of observation:

"Lo, where the heath with withering brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,

Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;
Here the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendour vainly shines around."

We have already heard of the workhouse hospital and the "potent quack" who attended to the sick. Let us now listen to Crabbe's description of the young clergyman who ministered to the afflicted of his village:

"A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday task
As much as God or man can fairly ask;
The rest he gives to loves and labours light,
To fields the morning, and to feasts the night.
* * *
A sportsman keen, he shouts through half the day,
And, skilled at whist, devotes the night to play."

But I must reluctantly forbear to quote more from "The Village," and ask you to turn your attention to two passages in "The

Borough," which show what sort of men lived in Crabbe's native town, and also indicate the power our author has in depicting two very different characters.

I will take Peter Grimes, the fisherman, first. Grimes was one of those human monsters who delight in cruelty; and the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, to its shame, furnished victims for its exercise in workhouse apprentices. The guardians of the overflowing workhouses of London were accustomed to get rid of their superfluous numbers by binding children as apprentices to masters, who practically became the owners of the little victims they were paid to teach.

"Peter had heard there were in London then —
Still have their being! — workhouse-clearing men,
Who, undisturbed by feelings just or kind,
Would parish-boys to needy tradesmen bind;
They in their want a trifling sum would take,
And toiling slaves of piteous orphans make." [1]

[1] For this abominable system see Walpole, "History of England from 1815," vol. i, p. 163, and his quotations from Romilly and Yonge. Dickens, of course, alludes to the apprenticing of parish boys in "Oliver Twist."

Grimes did several of these wretched boys to death by his cruelty, which was notorious in the borough, but the shocking thing was that nobody troubled to interfere.

"None put the question: 'Peter, dost thou give
The boy his food? What, man! the lad must live;
Consider, Peter, let the child have bread,
He'll serve thee better if he's stroked and fed.'
None reasoned thus; and some, on hearing cries,
Said calmly, 'Grimes is at his exercise.'"

At last Grimes, who seems to have been never quite sane in his brutality, went mad, and died raving at visions of his aged father and the boys he had done to death.

More inviting is a picture of another fisherman, the mayor of the borough:

"He was a fisher from his earliest day,
And placed his nets within the borough bay,
Where, by his skates, his herrings, and his soles,
He lived, nor dreamed of corporation doles."

At last he saved £240 ($1200), and asked a friend what to do with it. The friend suggests "put it out on interest."

"'Oh, but,' said Daniel, 'that's a dangerous plan,
He may be robbed like any other man.'"

The friend tells Daniel that he will be paid five per cent. every year.

"'What good is that?' quoth Daniel, 'for 'tis plain
If part I take, there can but part remain.'"

With great difficulty the principle of a mortgage is explained, and at last,

"Much amazed was that good man. 'Indeed,'
Said he, with gladdening eye, 'will money breed?
How have I lived? I grieve with all my heart
For my late knowledge of this precious art;
Five pounds for every hundred will he give?
And then the hundred — I begin to live."

Such was the simplicity of the good folk of Aldeburgh, and so little news of the great world reached the place that, when Crabbe, at the age of twenty-five or six, went to London in 1780, he had never heard of the genius and tragic fate of Chatterton.

I shall pass over the terrible year our aspirant for fame spent in the Metropolis. It is

a matter of personal pride to me to quote the following passage from the "Life":

"The only acquaintance he had on entering London was a Mrs. Burcham, who had been in early youth a friend of Miss Elmy's, and who was now the wife of a linen-draper in Cornhill. This worthy woman and her husband received him with cordial kindness; then invited him to make their house his home whenever he chose; and as often as he availed himself of this invitation he was treated with that frank familiarity which cancels the appearance of obligation." ("Life," by the Rev. G. Crabbe.)

I am glad to think my great-grand-parents understood the duty of hospitality.

At last, after a terrible struggle with poverty and the unsuccessful publication of a poem called "The Candidate," Crabbe, who had hitherto sought for a patron in vain, found one in Edmund Burke. It is said that the following lines, expressive of the writer's feelings on quitting Aldeburgh, satisfied Burke that his petitioner was a poet:

"As on their neighbouring beach the swallows stand,
And wait for favouring winds to leave the land,

While still for flight the ready wing is spread,
So waited I the favouring hour, and fled;
Fled from those shores where guilt and famine reign,
And cried, 'Ah! hapless they who still remain,
Who still remain to hear the ocean roar,
Whose greedy waves devour the lessening shore;
Till some fierce tide, with more imperious sway,
Sweeps the low hut and all it holds away;
When the sad tenant weeps from door to door,
And begs a poor protection from the poor.'"

Burke selected two poems, "The Village" and "The Library," for publication. He introduced Crabbe to Fox, and also to Reynolds: the latter brought him to Dr. Johnson; and when Burke heard that Crabbe desired to be ordained, he induced Dr. Yonge, Bishop of Norwich, to overlook his unacademic education, and to admit him to the ministry. Lord Thurlow, himself an East Anglian, had at first refused to receive Crabbe, but now treated him with much kindness, and gave him £100 ($500); so Crabbe returned to Aldeburgh a clergyman — a very different position from that which he had occupied on

leaving — and was shortly summoned thence to be domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, on the recommendation of his firm friend, Mr. Burke. From the Duke's seat at Belvoir "The Village" was published, after it had been submitted to Burke and Johnson. Naturally Crabbe's sentiments about rustic happiness and virtue accorded with the views of the worthy doctor, but it is pleasing to remark the kindness which made him at the height of his fame labour to improve the work of the younger poet. Very characteristic are Johnson's corrections of Crabbe's manuscript. Here is how Crabbe writes at the commencement of "The Village":

> "In fairer scenes, where peaceful pleasures spring,
> Tityrus the pride of Mantuan swains might sing:
> But charmed by him, or smitten with his views,
> Shall modern poets court the Mantuan muse?
> From Truth and Nature shall we widely stray,
> Where fancy leads, or Virgil led the way?"

From Johnson's hands little remains unchanged:

"On Mincio's banks in Cæsar's bounteous reign,
If Tityrus found the golden age again,
Must sleepy bards the flattering dreams prolong
Mechanick echoes of the Mantuan song?
From Truth and Nature shall we widely stray,
Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads the way?"

I cannot feel very certain myself that the poet or his corrector got the concluding line right.

I must now pass somewhat hurriedly over a long period. In 1785 Crabbe published "The Newspaper," and for twenty-two years he settled down to his clerical duties and did not reappear as an author. He lived at Stathern and Muston in Leicestershire the happy, domestic life of a country clergyman, returning to Suffolk when his wife inherited a share in the estate of her uncle, Mr. Tovell, at Parham.

In 1807 Crabbe appeared once more as a poet with "The Parish Register," and from this time his fame was unquestioned. "The Borough" followed and then "The Tales."

But I need not weary you with dates and details. A new generation arose to encourage Crabbe. His first poems had been hailed by Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Johnson, and Fox; his later by Scott, Byron, Lord Holland, and Rogers. His last days were spent in comfort and comparative affluence at Trowbridge, to which he had been appointed by a later Duke of Rutland. In 1817 he was lionised in London, and in 1822 he paid his famous visit to Edinburgh and found Sir Walter Scott in the midst of that preposterous pageant in which the King and Sir William Curtis, Alderman of the City of London, delighted the Scottish nation by appearing at Holyrood, tremendous in Stewart tartan, with claymore, philabeg, and other accessories of the garb of old Gaul. Scott, unwearied by his efforts to organise the King's visit, had time to welcome a brother poet, and it will be remembered that so delighted was he to greet one whose

writings had so often occupied his attention that he sat down on the sacred glass out of which George IV had deigned to drink, with the natural result.[1] Crabbe lived on till February, 1832, passing away, full of years and honours, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

Crabbe's works are sufficient to fill seven volumes, and it is not possible to do more than endeavour to form an estimate of him by limiting oneself to a few topics. I must content myself with three, and I fear that even then I cannot do justice to these. Those I propose are:

I. Crabbe as reflecting the manners of his age.

II. As a delineator of character.

III. His place as a poet.

I. I have spoken of Crabbe's scientific education — such as it was — and of his power of observation, and I find, even in

[1] Lockhart's "Life of Scott." Huchon points out several obvious discrepancies. "George Crabbe," etc., p. 435.

later life, more of the doctor than the parson. It is for this reason that his work is of more value than that of greater poets in reflecting his age. For Crabbe was not one of those who let "fancy lead the way," but dealt with sober realities of experience, and even refrained from generalising or theorising. For the religious life of the period Crabbe's poems are an invaluable document of which historians have, I suggest, made too little use. There is no reason to suppose that our author took Orders simply to secure literary leisure. His early diaries prove him a most devout man, and the fact that he occupied himself twenty-two years in parish work, without publishing, shows his devotion to his profession. Yet he apparently saw no harm in accepting two livings in Dorsetshire from the Lord Chancellor, which he scarcely ever went near, but took other work in the Vale of Belvoir. Nor did he feel any compunctions later in leaving his parishes

in the Midlands to the care of a non-resident clergyman in order to live on his wife's property in Suffolk; and he evidently considered the then Duke of Rutland unduly slow in providing for him. He was not always popular with his parishioners. This was not unnatural at Aldeburgh, where he had been known under less prosperous circumstances, but he met with a good deal of opposition when, after his long residence in Suffolk, he returned to Muston; and at Trowbridge he was at first considered too worldly for his flock, and only slowly won their sincere respect. A strict moralist, he had no dislike of social pleasure, and as a staunch Whig he shrank from enthusiasm of every kind. The serious and the profane alike distrusted him. The worldly remonstrated at his description of the workhouse chaplain, to which allusion has been made, and in deference to the complaints of the religious world the vigorous lines in "The Library":

> "Calvin grows gentle in this silent coast,
> Nor finds a single heretic to roast,"

make way for a weaker couplet with a half line plagiarised from Dryden:

> "Socinians here and Calvinists abide
> And thin partitions angry chiefs divide."

Let us consider the clergy and religious teachers generally as he describes them.

I can only allude to the five rectors, whom old Dibble, the village clerk in the "Parish Register," remembered. First comes "Good Master Addle," who

> "Filled the seven-fold surplice fairly out,"

and "dozing died"; Next was Parson Peele, whose favourite text was "I will not spare you," and with "piercing jokes, and he'd a plenteous store," raised the tithes all round. Dr. "Grandspear" followed Peele, a man who never stinted his "nappy beer," and whom even cool Dissenters wished and hoped that a man so kind,

"A way to heaven, though not their own, might find." After him came the "Author Rector" —

> "Careless was he of surplice, hood and band,
> And kindly took them as they came to hand."

He was succeeded by the young man from Cambridge, assailed in his youth by a "clamorous sect," who preached "conviction" so violently that "Our best sleepers started as they slept."

But says old Dibble:

> "Down he sank upon his wretched bed
> And gloomy crotchets filled his wandering head."

And it is on this point that Crabbe is so illuminating as to the spirit of his age. His difficulties as a clergyman were due rather to the fanaticism than to the indifference of his flock. In "Sir Eustace Grey," a very powerful description of a madman who finds religious peace at last, the poet concludes, —

> "But, Ah! though time could yield relief
> And soften woes it cannot cure;

Would we not suffer pain and grief
To have our reason sound and sure?
Then let us keep our bosoms pure
Our fancies' favourite flights suppress;
Prepare the body to endure,
And bend the mind to meet distress,
And then His Guardian care implore,
Whom demons dread and men adore."

As the doctor recommends a moderate and temperate life as the best preventive of disease, and distrusts strong remedies and universal panaceas, so Crabbe (true to the best medical tradition) regards the pastoral work of healing the soul. Tolerant in most respects, he is severe on what the eighteenth century styled "enthusiasm," and on sentimentalism in religion generally.

Thus, in "The Borough" we have in the letter on religious sects a description of the contempt the Calvinistic Methodists had for Church teaching:

"Hark to the Churchman; day by day he cries:
Children of men, be virtuous, be wise,
Seek patience, justice, temp'rance, meekness, truth,
In age be courteous, be sedate in youth, —

So they advise, and when such things be read,
How can we wonder that their flocks are dead?"

This "cauld morality," as Scott makes Mr. Trumbull call it in "Redgauntlet," is contrasted with a really rousing sermon:

"Further and further spread the conquering word
As loud he cried — 'the Battle of the Lord.'
Ev'n those apart who were the sound denied,
Fell down instinctive, and in spirit died.
Nor stayed he yet — his eye, his frown, his speech,
His very gesture, had a power to teach;
With outstretch'd arms, strong voice, and piercing call
He won the field and made the Dagons fall;
And thus in triumph took his glorious way,
Through scenes of horror, terror, and dismay."

Crabbe often found his work hindered by a sort of fatalistic quietism which gave no hope to the "unconverted," even when they sought the aid of the minister of religion. In "Abel Keene" we have the story of a merchant's clerk who abandoned his faith, and then in days of poverty came for help:

"Said the good man, 'and then rejoice therefore:
'Tis good to tremble: prospects then are fair,
When the lost soul is plunged in just despair.

Once thou wert simply honest, just and pure,
Whole as thou thought'st, and never wish'd a cure:

* * *

'What must I do,' I said, 'my soul to free?'
'Do nothing, man — it will be done for thee.' —
'But must I not, my reverend guide, believe?'
'If thou art call'd thou wilt the faith receive:' —
'But I repent not.' — Angry he replied,
'If thou art call'd thou need'st naught beside:
Attend on us, and if 'tis Heaven's decree
The call will come — if not, ah, woe! for thee.'"

Crabbe had very little toleration for spiritual valetudinarians. He liked a good practical Christianity and was a little inclined to class the overscrupulous with the *malades imaginaires*. In "The Gentleman Farmer" we have a cleverly told story of a man of property, a professed atheist and an avowed enemy of priests and doctors. At last he fell ill; and his artful housekeeper, the meek Rebecca, produces a Scotch cousin, Dr. Mollet. He is so successful that Rebecca decides to allow the Rev. Mr. Whisp, a converted ostler, to advise her master. Mollet and

Whisp between them point out that it is his duty to marry Rebecca. Then the three batten happily on their victim:

> "Mollet his body orders, Whisp his soul,
> And o'er his purse the lady takes control."

Though Crabbe lived in the days of the French Revolution and Tom Paine, infidelity seems to have given him far less trouble than the enthusiasm of his parishioners. In "The Learned Boy" we have the tale of a precocious lad such as our poet detested, a mean little creature, neat and docile at school, to whom much could be taught because he could imitate without reflecting:

> "He thought not much indeed — but what depends
> On pains and care, was at his fingers' ends."

As it was impossible to make such a lad into a farmer like his honest father, he was sent to an office in town and picked up some up-to-date views of the Bible from a brother-clerk. On his return he thus explained his

views to his grandmother, much to the dear old lady's distress:

"I myself began
To feel disturbed and to my Bible ran;
I now am wiser — yet agree in this,
The book has things that are not much amiss;
It is a fine old work, and I protest
I hate to hear it treated as a jest;
The book has wisdom in it, if you look
Wisely upon it as another book."

The father, overhearing his hopeful son, treats him to a long discourse, driven home with a cartwhip, and concluding:

"Teachers men honour, learners they allure;
But learners teaching of contempt are sure;
Scorn is their certain meed, and smart their only cure."

I have dealt hitherto with the subject of religion as showing how Crabbe can be used to illustrate his age. For politics I may refer to the witty tale of "The Dumb Orators"; for social life to "Amusements in the Borough," and to "Clelia" and "Blaney" in the same collection.

II. In the biography the son writes with much discrimination of his father's genius:

"Whatever truth there may be in these lines (from "The Learned Boy," disparaging order), it is certain that this insensibility to the beauty of order was a defect in his own mind; arising from what I must call his want of taste. . . . This view of his mind is, I must add, confirmed by his remarkable indifference to almost all the proper objects of taste. He had no real love for painting, for music, for architecture, or for what a painter's eye considers as the beauties of a landscape. But he had a passion for science — the science of the human mind first —," etc.

I believe that in delineation of character Crabbe is an artist indeed, worthy to rank with Jane Austen and the Brontës, and perhaps even more subtle than these ladies. He was not without a certain cynicism, and his powers of critical observation were great. He draws the drunken old reprobate in "The Borough," the magnificent "Sir Denys Brand," the gentle, suffering "Ellen Orford," the University don in "Schools," with masterly skill. I can only indicate his

power in this respect by a few inadequate quotations.

The sketches of the characters in the almshouses in "The Borough" I commend to you as masterpieces. Clelia and Blaney had come down in life, and were without much excuse. They had been jobbed into the institution by Sir Denys Brand, and his words at the meeting of trustees throw a world of light on the baronet's character. Of Blaney he says:

"'Tis true,' said he, 'the fellow's quite a brute —
A very beast; but yet, with all his sin,
He has a manner — let the devil in.'"

Of Clelia:

"'With all her faults,' he said, 'the woman knew
How to distinguish — had a manner, too,
And, as they say, she is allied to some
In decent station — let the creature come.'"

But though these two are powerfully drawn, Crabbe expends more care and skill in depicting Benbow, who had been

"a jovial trader; men enjoyed
The night with him: the day was unemployed."

Benbow, whenever he could find an audience, used to dilate on "The men of might to mingle strong drink," whom he had known. There was Squire Asgill, whose manor house was a disgrace and scandal to the countryside. It is needless to particularise. I can explain best by saying that his life was that of Sir Pitt Crawley in his later days, only he was more hospitable and generous. Let us see the worthy squire at his best, in church:

"His worship ever was a churchman true,
He held in scorn the methodistic crew;
May God defend the Church and save the King,
He'd pray devoutly and divinely sing.
Admit that he the holy day would spend
As priests approved not, still he was a friend;
Much then I blame the preacher as too nice
To call such trifles by the name of vice;
Hinting, though gently and with cautious speech,
Of good example — 'tis their trade to preach.

* * *

A weaker man, had he been so reviled,
Had left the place — he only swore and smiled."

A still greater hero of Benbow's was Captain Dowling, who was ready to drink against any rival:

"Man after man they from the trial shrank,
And Dowling ever was the last that drank."

But we must leave the old reprobate, and go on to a far subtler delineation of character. Sir Denys Brand, to use Crabbe's own words, was "maybe too highly placed for an author, who seldom ventures above middle life to delineate." It is admitted that Sir Denys was a real person, and the biographer withholds his name out of consideration for his family.[1] It must be remembered that Crabbe's nature was both proud and sensitive, and the scathing satire he expends on Sir Denys was probably provoked by some real or fancied slight.

[1] He is said to have been "Challoner Arcedekne, who built Glevering Hall," near Parham. Huchon, "George Crabbe," etc., p. 309. The bitterness of the satire lies in the little known fact that at the time the family of Arcedekne was not in the eighteenth century reckoned among the old county families: their fortune having been recently acquired in the East Indies.

He is one of the trustees of the almshouses. He took the office —

"True 'twas beneath him; but to do men good
Was motive never by his heart withstood."

Sir Denys is an aristocratic prig of the first water, and Crabbe hated prigs. He is one of those men who can be, with a certain amount of truth, described as possessing all the virtues:

"In him all merits were decreed to meet,
Sincere though cautious, frank and yet discreet,
Just all his dealings, faithful every word,
His passions' master and his temper's lord."

His benevolence was splendid, and known to all men:

"He left to meaner minds the simple deed,
By which the houseless rest, the hungry feed;
His was a public bounty, vast and grand,
'Twas not in him to work with viewless hand.

* * *

He the first lifeboat plann'd; to him the place
Is deep in debt — 'twas he revived the race."

Yet nobody liked him —

"'Twould give me joy [says Crabbe] some gracious deed
to meet
That has not called for glory in the street;
Who felt for many, could not always shun,
In some soft moment to be kind to one;
And yet they tell us, when Sir Denys died,
That not a widow in the borough cried."

III. Perhaps it may be said that the subject of my lecture was after all rather a commonplace old gentleman, and if what I have said leaves this view, it is because I have failed to convey the effect which the study of his works has left upon me. He certainly made a great impression in his time, and was hailed as a true poet in an age of poets Nor is an age always wrong when it acclaims a man in whom posterity sees little merit. To compare Crabbe with Byron as a poet would be as absurd as to place his little stories on a level with the romances of Scott, whether in prose or verse. But in his own time men rated him very highly, and this is the more remarkable

because he was essentially a man of the eighteenth century, who achieved his reputation in the nineteenth. He saturated himself in Pope and Dryden, and the wits of a bygone age, and never conformed to the taste of his own. The romantic movement, much as he admired Scott's writings, never influenced Crabbe nor does he seem to have been affected by the Lake Poets. He was simply himself: simple-minded if sensitive, full of courage, and with a quiet dignity of his own. Unworldly, yet remarkably shrewd, curiously blind to the beauties of Nature and of art, yet wonderfully alive to the marvels of the world and the pathos of life. Stern and uncompromising as a realist, he lacked neither sympathy nor imagination, and possessed a saving sense of descriptive humour. Lord Thurlow said of him, "He's as like Parson Adams as twelve to a dozen, by G—d," and he has much of the winning simplicity of Fielding's charming

clerical creation. And yet he had the elevation of character and the genius with fearless hand to tear the veil which hid the lives of the poor from their richer neighbours, to expose the cruelty, injustice, and rapacity of an age which for all its greatness was singularly callous and unsympathetic of weakness and suffering; and Crabbe may take his place not only with the poets of his time, but with the Clarksons, the Howards, the Frys, and the good men and women who succeeded in inaugurating an era of practical humanity. We need not grudge him the generous commendation of the greatest among his contemporary poets —

"Nature's sternest painter and her best."

LECTURE III

Margaret Catchpole

May I invite you to-day to a remote corner of England and ask you to associate with rather humble folk? Our heroine is a servant maid; her romance is her love for a smuggler and the faithful affection of a young farmer. The greatest personages to whom I shall introduce you are a Suffolk brewer and his worthy lady and uncommonly numerous family, one of whom was my grandfather. Yet it is almost impossible to imagine that men alive within our memory should have shared even as young children in the scenes I have to describe — the lawlessness of the country, the wild acts recorded, the stilted language employed by the chief actors. The strange callousness of the criminal code,

the very piety displayed by some of the principal characters, are completely out of date and almost incomprehensible. The author himself of this true romance, though he only died in 1877, evidently wrote and thought in ways quite alien to those now in vogue.

I shall continue what I have said about Crabbe by attempting briefly to describe the county of Suffolk (the South-folk), which must occupy our attention during this lecture. I do so with no apology, for I believe that many a New England family tree springs from roots deeply embedded in its soil.

One thing realised by every child born in East Anglia is that he is not one of those inferior people who are born in the "Shires." His native land is not called after any town, Northampton, Bedford, Leicester, or Cambridge: he belongs to a race, not to a territorial division, invented less than a thousand years ago. He and his kinsmen, the North folk, are East Anglians; and the rest of the

world are to him "furriners," or people who came from the "Sheeres." Not that he is an unmixed race — far from it. The peasantry were in the land long before the Angles arrived. They are a small dark people, who have survived countless invasions and will probably outlive modern civilisation. When you see them beating a field or covert for game and kill hares and rabbits by throwing their sticks with unerring aim, you feel that they do much as their ancestors did before the dawn of history. The Anglian is a big blond man slow of speech and apparently somewhat dull, but in a bargain he is seldom the loser. The little town of Hadleigh was once the capital of Alfred's rival, Guthrum, the Dane; and the Norse origin of many families reveals itself in Grimwood, Grimwade, Grimsey, and Grimes. Flemings and Dutch, French Huguenots, have all contributed to the population of East Anglia; but despite the blending of nation-

alities there is a strong feeling of a common tie binding all these heterogeneous elements together. Yet there are curious local divisions existing to this day. The eastern and western parts of the county are at constant feud. When the county councils were established in the 'eighties,' Suffolk had to be divided into East and West, because the two would not work together. When last year the county was made a single diocese, Ipswich would not allow the ancient western monastic town of Bury St. Edmunds to give the bishop his title; and Bury St. Edmunds scorned to submit to the richer but less aristocratic Ipswich. So in desperation the diocese had to be called 'St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.'

To look at an Ordnance map one would say that Suffolk was very flat and eminently agricultural. The highest hill I could find was 402 feet above the sea; seldom does the land rise over 200 feet. Yet a motor drive

in Suffolk gives one the sensation of having been on a switchback railway. One is never on the level, and some of the little ascents and descents are very sharp. The beautiful church towers are usually on hills and the churches are often placed outside the villages. The road or 'street' (Roman *stratum*) on each side of which the hamlet stands frequently runs up a hill. The lanes are narrow and muddy; and at the bottom of a hill often waterlogged. Communication must have been exceedingly difficult — a fact which explains many peculiarities of the people.

Nowhere is there a sharper line drawn by nature in the county than between the agricultural land in the centre and the coast. Rarely do the corn lands reach the sea. A belt of breezy commons, bright with gorse, extends almost from Lowestoft to Ipswich, and a glance at the map shews how thin the population is. Only by branch lines of recent construction does the railway reach

the Suffolk coast. Cut off by a wild tract of commons and marshes, the inhabitants of the little ports formed strangely isolated communities, and regarded with no friendly eye the villagers of the interior, marrying only among themselves and keeping carefully apart. A brief survey of the coast throws a light on the character of the people. All along the shore the five fathom line, sometimes half a mile, sometimes as much as three miles from the shore, marks the continual encroachment of the North Sea. Towns like Aldeburgh and Dunwich, once standing a mile or more from the shore, are now, as in the case of the first, threatened by the waves; or, like Dunwich, once a famous seaport, almost entirely washed away and submerged. Occasionally, as from Aldeburgh to Orford, the sea makes its own breakwater by casting up long banks of shingle, and even now, for nearly ten miles, save for coastguard stations and lighthouses,

the Suffolk foreshore is absolutely uninhabited.

One of the most striking features of the coast is the inland tidal rivers. In the south are the Stour and the Orwell, which converge at the important harbour of Harwich; and at the head of the tidal waters of the Orwell is Ipswich. The river itself when the tide is high is a most beautiful estuary with parks and woods sloping down to the water — Stoke Park, Wherstead Park, Woolverstone on the south, Alnesbourn Priory and Orwell Park on the north. A few miles north of the estuary of the Orwell and Stour is the river Deben, which culminates inland at Woodbridge and was the scene of many a solitary boating expedition by the famous translator of Omar Khayyam, Edward Fitzgerald. Then comes the shingle bank I have spoken of, parting the river Ore from the sea, as far as Slaughden, when it turns inland and becomes the Alde, giving

its name to Aldeburgh. Great salt marshes in many places fringe these rivers and impart an air of desolation to the surrounding scenery.

Rightly to appreciate this curious country we must divest ourselves of modern ideas, forget that we can be in London in two hours, ignore the fact that the commons have been turned into golf courses, that the people are occupied by letting lodgings, that their harvest is the holiday season, and that we can motor on most of the roads in comfort. One must go back, and not so very far after all, to a time when it would have needed a guide to enable you to find Aldeburgh and the coast, and when you would have received the reverse of a hearty welcome from its inhabitants, "a surly race" who viewed strangers with "a suspicious eye," and no wonder, since they had the best of reasons for concealing "the way they got their wealth." You must transport yourself into

this past, if you would wish to understand what the poet Crabbe has to tell you about his native place.

I think I caught something of his spirit when I went to Aldeburgh to prepare myself for writing this lecture. It was on a chill December day, damp and cold with a north-east wind. I had had a cold for a week and it lay very heavily on my chest, so my spirits were the reverse of buoyant. Rain was falling as I made my way along the deserted High street and walked to Slaughden Quay, where Crabbe was born, and as a young man worked at rolling casks from the hookers to the stores. A "dirty sea" at low tide was breaking against the shingle bank, and on the other side was the valley of the Alde and dreary marshes stretching to the low uplands on the horizon. On the rising ground above the town rose the church tower of Aldeburgh; and one could well imagine what a dreary home the desolate quay and the squalid

little town must have been, when the only approach was by the harbourless sea, or by sandy tracks over a bleak moor, or by the sluggish river winding through the marsh.

The peculiarities of East Anglia, both inland and on the coast, are reflected in its inhabitants. It is a country which by its isolation has fostered strong originality in all classes, manifesting itself frequently in a species of coarseness of fibre and sensibility. The people have not a character for high intelligence, at any rate in Suffolk, where "silly" is the epithet applied to the county. Despite this fact perhaps no part of Great Britain has produced so many "worthies" of the highest order. In almost every one of these the "animal" is very strong and the intelligence is dominated by practical considerations. Suffolk and Norfolk respectively have bred perhaps the two greatest of English statesmen — Cardinal Wolsey and Sir Robert Walpole. Wolsey impressed his

contemporaries by his native force and arrogance; and Bishop Creighton explains in his biography of him how sane a view he took of his country's position in regard to the politics of Europe. Walpole, with the tastes of a boorish squire, little delicacy of mind, and a cynical contempt for mankind, was an unrivalled financier and minister in days of material prosperity. In the forefront among the pioneers of English science stands the famous Suffolk name of Bacon. In his great achievements and his equally serious faults Francis Bacon, Viscount Verulam, is an East Anglian. His luminous mind is seen in the singularly lucid English in which his thoughts are expressed, his rough commonsense reveals itself in the way in which he brushes aside the speculative theories of the philosophers, and goes directly for results based on practical experiment. And on the darker side, the unscrupulous way in which he crushed

friend and foe alike in order to attain the position, which his genius entitled him to take in the country, discloses the same lack of sensibility which we frequently see in the East Anglian character.

Among the great judges few take a higher place than Lord Thurlow. Scarcely anyone could inspire such fear by the mere force of his personality than he. Whether in the House of Lords, when he crushed the Duke of Grafton, who twitted him with being a *novus homo;* or in the law courts; or at his own table in private life, where, in his old age, he could make the greatest wits of the day retire in discomfiture, he shewed himself an antagonist to be dreaded. Yet, as Crabbe attests, under that rough exterior beat a kind heart.

Not only the genius of Nelson, the son of a Norfolk Rector, as well as the moral failure which cast a stain on the unparalleled lustre of his name, may be traceable to

his native soil. Even to-day there is one to whom England looks with confidence, though his stern practical ability inspires but little affection, among whose proud and well-deserved titles is the name of his mother's home, an out-of-the-way Suffolk village; for on entering the peerage Earl Kitchener assumed the style of Baron Kitchener of Khartoum and Aspal.[1]

The force of character which produces great men is certain almost to manifest itself for evil also, and we recognise the truth of much of Crabbe's stern realism in the characters to which he introduces us. As Dr. Jessop, a singularly acute observer of the Norfolk villager, points out, the criminal annals of East Anglia disclose outbursts of remarkable ferocity on the part of its inhabitants. Side by side with this vindictive spirit is a proneness to superstition, generally of a gloomy character. Aldeburgh has records

[1] The lecture was delivered March, 1916.

of many portents and apparitions in its annals; nowhere was the witch finder more active than in Suffolk; and, even in the later half of the nineteenth century, a woman suspected of being a witch was done to death in the neighbouring county of Essex. We have seen in Crabbe how what was then called "enthusiasm" in religion drove more than one of his characters into a despair of gloom. Not that there was not a great deal of genuine piety: the churches of East Anglia are the glory of the countryside, and many of the most magnificent are due to the liberality of its traders and manufacturers in the days when it was one of the industrial centres of English life. Indeed, it may not be merely local vanity which explains the contemptuous epithet "silly" as carrying with it not a slight but a compliment — the word being used in its older sense as the equivalent of the German *selig*, "pious." Nowhere did the Reformation obtain a stronger

hold than in the diocese of Norwich; and its roll of Protestant martyrs in the reign of Mary was exceptionally large. Forcefulness for good or evil, superstition, and genuine piety all play their part in the story I am now about to ask you to consider. The popularity in Suffolk of the life of Margaret Catchpole — though the literary merit of the book is not great — is a testimony that her tale strikes a sympathetic chord to this day.

I must preface what I have to say by a few remarks about the author of the book. The Rev. Richard Cobbold was the son of John Cobbold, a wealthy brewer of the Cliff House, Ipswich, by his second wife, who plays so important a part in the story I am about to put before you. Mrs. Cobbold was a very remarkable woman, a friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, an author of some repute; and, what was most unusual at the time, an eloquent public speaker. She married Mr.

Cobbold when he was a widower with fourteen children and had by him a large family herself — six sons and a daughter. Richard was the youngest son, being born in 1797 and dying in his eightieth year in 1877. He was Rector of Wortham, a parish in the north of Suffolk, an author of repute in his day, highly respected as a devoted clergyman, a strong churchman, and a keen and active sportsman. In 1845 he brought out "Margaret Catchpole." In his preface he says: "The public may depend upon the truth of the main features of this narrative; indeed, most of the facts recorded were matters of public notoriety at the time of their occurrence. The author who details them is a son with whom this extraordinary female lived and from whose hands he received the letters and facts here given." The story of Margaret Catchpole told in the novel is briefly as follows:

She was born at Nacton, a village not far

from Ipswich, on what was then a somewhat desolate heath on the north bank of the Orwell. Her father was head ploughman to a farmer named Denton, a well-known breeder of Suffolk cart horses. From childhood she was known as a good rider, and she obtained her first place as a servant by catching a very spirited pony of Mr. Denton's, whose wife was taken suddenly ill, and riding at a gallop to the town and through the streets crowded on a market day to fetch the doctor. As she had not had time to saddle or bridle her steed, she rode him bareback with a halter to guide him — a really remarkable feat for a child of fourteen. As she grew up, she found a suitor in a clever sailor named William Laud, originally a boat builder, who had been a pupil in navigation, says the author, under a Mr. Crabbe, a brother of the poet's.[1] Laud's education

[1] This seems impossible from what is known of the Crabbe family. (See Huchon's "George Crabbe.") The poet had no brother who could have taught Laud.

and abilities seem to have been above his station in life, and had he been able to keep straight he would have risen to the command of a merchant ship, and possibly even to officer's rank in the Royal Navy. As it was, he attached himself to a man named Bargood, an unscrupulous employer of smugglers, and became one of the leaders of that highly organized body which in the war with France was bent on defrauding the revenue. Laud's influence was singularly bad for the Catchpole family. Two brothers came to a bad end, another enlisted and disappeared for years, and the whole household fell under suspicion of being in league with the smugglers.

Now comes the undoubted fiction in the story. Margaret Catchpole particularly requested that her husband's name should be concealed, if her adventures were ever published, in order that her children might not know she had been a convict. Consequently

we must assume that the honest lover called John Barry of Levington, the parish next to Nacton, is fictitious, and probably that he and his brother Edward are introduced to heighten the romance.[1] Anyhow, in the story Laud was severely wounded by John's brother Edward, who commanded the preventive men on Felixstow Beach, and was supposed to have been killed. Margaret nursed Laud in his concealment into convalescence; and later on when she was in service at a Mrs. Wake's he attempted to carry her off by violence. She was, however, protected by the faithful John Barry and a strange old fisherman nicknamed Robinson Crusoe. John Barry was seriously wounded. On his recovery he proposed to Margaret, who refused him; and, in desperation, the rejected

[1] An example of Mr. Cobbold's local knowledge and the skill with which he weaves it into his story is seen in the fact that he makes the Barrys the sons of a farmer who first used crag shells for manure. In a Suffolk gazetteer, about 1855, I discovered that this had really been done at Levington, but in 1712, a generation or so before the Barrys could have appeared.

lover emigrated to the Colony of New South Wales, Australia.

In May, 1793, Margaret entered into service with Mrs. Cobbold of the Cliff, Ipswich. The house still stands adjoining the well-known brewery on the shore of the river Orwell. Even to this day it lies at the fringe of the business part of Ipswich, at the end of the docks and quays; beyond it is country and the well-wooded banks of the beautiful river. The girl was under-nursemaid, and also helped the cook in the evening. She soon manifested exceptional abilities; for not only did she learn all the lessons which the children had to prepare, but on three occasions she saved the life of members of Mrs. Cobbold's large family. She rescued two little boys, George and Frederick (the latter my grandfather), from the fall of a wall, which would inevitably have crushed them; she saved another, Henry, in Ipswich, when he had fallen into

deep water; and when an older boy, named William, had gone alone down the Orwell to shoot ducks and his boat had been overturned, it was by her courage and resource that the lad was recovered in a state of insensibility. On the latter occasion Laud reappears suddenly. He had been pressed into the Navy and was now necessarily leading a more reputable life, and Margaret could avow her partiality for her lover without shame. In 1794 Laud fought in Lord Howe's victory of the 1st of June and apparently distinguished himself highly in the action, being one of the crew entrusted with bringing home a valuable prize. In the story Laud is represented as a man naturally with good impulses, but weak and unstable; and the villain of the piece is the sailor who was Laud's mate in his smuggling days — one Luff.

Luff was determined to get Laud back to the smuggling business; Laud, on the contrary,

desired to lead a virtuous life with Margaret. Accordingly, when he was free of the navy, he brought his prize money and left it at Mr. Cobbold's house, but Margaret, who had now become cook and had got into trouble by entertaining too many sailors, refused to see her lover — of course not knowing it was he. Luff then turned up, and, as she refused to give him information about Laud, threw her into a well from which she was rescued with difficulty. Luff was killed soon after in a desperate encounter with the preventive men, and from what Margaret's brother Edward could gather Luff had murdered Laud. Margaret did not believe it; but her conduct became so unsatisfactory from grief and disappointment that Mrs. Cobbold, despite all she had done for the family, was compelled to dismiss her from her service. Laud in the meantime had reformed and settled down as a boat builder, and on his uncle's death he

came into the business. But the habit of smuggling was too strong, and he returned to his old courses. This brings us to the tragedy. Margaret has heard that Laud is alive from an old servant of the Cobbolds. She longs for an explanation and is determined to see him. Instead of consulting any of her reputable friends she goes to Ipswich and is persuaded that Laud is in London waiting for her there. Even a letter from him is produced expressing his readiness to marry her if she would join him. This clumsy fraud was devised by a man named Cook in order to induce Margaret, whose fame as a rider was known to him, to steal a horse from Mr. Cobbold, and to ride him up to London. Regardless of the consequences, Margaret took her old master's best horse, named Rochford, and rode him to London, seventy miles, in eight hours. Of course the loss of the horse was known at once, and handbills were issued offering a reward. Mar-

garet, dressed as a groom, was arrested soon after her arrival in London, and sent back to Ipswich to be tried at the Assizes. On August 9, 1797, she pleaded guilty at Bury St. Edmunds and was condemned to death. Her crime was then considered a most serious one, but she made a very favourable impression, and the witnesses for character gave such good testimony that the judge commuted the death sentence to one of transportation for seven years. For three years Margaret remained in Ipswich gaol; and it is probable that her sentence would have been remitted altogether but for what ensued.

Laud was now smuggling on a large scale. He was deeply concerned with an affair in which two preventive men were beaten and thrown into the sea at Southwold for reporting that they had seen forty carts and horses ready to take a cargo which was to be "run" near Dunwich. A reward of

£100 for his apprehension was offered in the newspapers on March 2d, 1799. Shortly after this 880 gallons of gin were seized and the guilt of smuggling it brought home to Laud. All his property was confiscated and he was given a year's imprisonment and sentenced to pay £100. He was committed to Ipswich gaol, and would have to stay there after his sentence had expired till the fine was paid. Of course Margaret, whose good conduct had made her practically free of the prison, discovered that her lover was an inmate; and, as she had kept intact the prize money he had given her, she was able to give him the means of obtaining his liberation at the end of his year's imprisonment. Laud persuaded her to try to escape and join him, and the way she did this is one of the most extraordinary in her romantic career. The wall of the prison was twenty-five feet high and protected at the top with iron spikes. Margaret succeeded in getting a

flower stand, which placed endways raised her to within thirteen feet of the top. She had made herself a garment like a shepherd's smock and a pair of trousers so as to be unincumbered in her movements. By casting a clothes-line over the *chevaux-de-frise* on the top of the wall she managed to climb up to the iron spikes. Then, lowering the line on the other side, she turned over between the revolving spikes and let herself down on the opposite side. She and Laud made for a place called Sudbourn; but were overtaken on the beach where, after a desperate fight, Laud was killed by Edward Barry, and Margaret arrested and taken back to the gaol.

It was one of the strange anomalies of the cruel law of that age that whereas ruffians like Cook, and desperados like Laud escaped the capital sentence, comparatively innocent persons were hanged without mercy. For a reprieved person to escape from prison was death, and, though Margaret was ignorant

of the terrible penalty which she had incurred, there seemed no hope of her meeting with any further leniency. She was again brought before the same judge, Lord Chief Baron Sir Archibald Macdonald, who had condemned her in August, 1797, on the third day of the same month in 1800. Again she pleaded guilty, and when the judge condemned her in very stern language she made a short speech accepting his sentence, which impressed everyone present in the court house. Her eloquence and her whole demeanour profoundly impressed the judge, and again he obtained power to respite her, sentencing her this time to lifelong transportation.

Throughout her trials Margaret found in Mrs. Cobbold a constant friend, one who never allowed her for a moment to feel forsaken. The letters which passed between her and her former mistress are preserved, and on reading them one cannot but fail

to note how in style and diction the maid had been influenced by Mrs. Cobbold. Margaret continued to write from Australia, and her letters are marvellous when one considers her antecedents and lack of early education. She collected specimens to send to her mistress, some of which were presented to the Ipswich Museum. Once more she was able to save life by an act of desperate daring, from which the men shrank, at the time of a flood. At last, according to the story, "John Barry," who had prospered in the colony, found that she was there, sought her out, and married her. The last letter published in the book is dated June 25th, 1812, and announces her marriage to John Barry. It contains these words: "Should you ever think fit, as you once hinted in your letter to me, to write my history, or to leave it to others to publish, you have my free permission at my decease, whenever that shall take place, to do so. But let my husband's

name be concealed, change it, change it to any other . . . for mine and my children's sake." She died September 10th, 1841, in the sixty-eighth year of her age.

The book raises problems of exceptional literary interest. In the first place, it was written by a man of unimpeachable character, who wrote with a distinctly religious aim, in view mainly to shew that the heroine after having violated "the laws of God and man" became by "the inculcation of Christian faith and virtue conspicuous for the sincerity of her reformation." He avers that his narrative is strictly true and based on facts "well known to many persons of the highest respectability still living" and that he himself received the letters he quotes. He has no motive for deviating from his intention to tell the truth except that, as we have seen, Margaret Catchpole desired her married name to be concealed. That the author studiously carried out this natural

wish is proved by the fact that a wealthy lady in New South Wales, named Mrs. Reiby, who had left Bury in Lancashire as a girl, was declared to be the true Margaret Catchpole, to her great annoyance, as she naturally had no desire to figure as a "convict heroine." In 1910 the story of Margaret was dramatised in London and acted by the late Mr. Laurence Irving and his wife. A correspondence thereupon appeared in the *East Anglian Daily Times* in which it was hinted that Mrs. Reiby, a Staffordshire girl, was transported in 1791 for the same offence of horse stealing.[1]

No one can read the book without perceiving that all the conversations are fictitious. Mr. Cobbold was no Shakespeare, and he makes all his characters talk in the

[1] The case of horse stealing tried in Lancashire in 1791 was a peculiarly hard one. A young lady of good family was condemned to transportation for mounting a stranger's horse, having been dared to do so by a friend. She was only fourteen years of age! She was apparently sent to Australia rather as a passenger than a convict; and married the captain of the ship.

same style as (if report be true) he conversed himself. The whole of the Barry incidents may be fictitious ; for if the details given were true, everybody in Suffolk must have known who Margaret's husband was. The father of Edmund and John "Barry" was the discoverer of crag shells as manure and was a farmer and miller at Levington Hill, the next parish to Nacton. But even then the author may have used pardonable license. Still the last letter of Margaret's which the author declares he received from his mother cannot be genuine. It is signed Margaret "Barry," and it says expressly that she was married to the man who had loved her fruitlessly when the family lived at Nacton. In point of fact Margaret never married.

Had the book been a document written many centuries ago, there would be suggested grave doubts whether such a woman ever existed ; as it is, the Cobbold family have lived in Ipswich in unbroken succession dur-

ing the past century; and documents, like the original gaol-delivery in 1797 and the exemption of Mr. Cobbold from any parish offices for arresting the culprit, prove beyond doubt the existence of Margaret Catchpole.

As, however, the subject of these lectures is 'English social life,' I shall now give some extracts from the book before me, and from Crabbe's biography to shew how the peasantry lived in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.[1]

Even to this day if you enter a harvest field in Suffolk at reaping time you will hear the old Norman French demand for "*Largess*" and you will be expected to give it. Mr. Cobbold gives in his book a description of a harvest home, many features of which are still remembered. The farmer lodged all the single men in his house, but the married men (known as hinds) lived in the neighbouring cottages. When the last sheaf of corn

[1] See Appendix on the literary problem of Mr. Cobbold's novel.

was conveyed to the stack-yard, the barn was covered with green leaves and the sheaf brought in with shouting and blowing of the harvest horn. The farmer then gave an ample supper to the labourers, and he, his wife, and daughters waited on their guests. The head man of the harvest field acted as "lord of the feast." The chief song was called "Hallo Largess," and was in honour of the division of the Largess obtained in harvest time among the reapers. Here is a verse of the song quoted by our author:

"Now the ripening corn
In the sheaves is borne,
And the loaded wain
Bring home the grain.
The merry, merry reapers sing
And jocund shouts the happy harvest hind
Hallo Large, Hallo Large, Hallo Largess."

"At evening when the work of the day is over," to quote from "Margaret Catchpole," "all the men collect in a circle, and Hallo, that is cry, "Largess." Three times they say

in a low tone, "Hallo Large! Hallo Large! Hallo Large!" and all, hand in hand, bow their heads almost to the ground; but after the third monotonous yet sonorous junction, they lift up their heads, and, with one burst of their voices, cry out "Gess." I cannot help wondering whether this semi-barbarous custom which prevailed in Suffolk survive in those marvellous yells in which the exuberant spirits of youth in the highly civilized universities of America now find a vent.

Allusion has been made to the superstition of the East Anglian peasantry, and a most interesting example is given in Thomas Colson, better known in Ipswich as Robinson Crusoe, the fisherman on the Orwell. He had built a boat for himself of the strangest materials and was constantly at work on the river. His skill was wonderful, and he is described as a perfect fisherman, quiet, steady, active, and thoughtful. In character he was singularly benevolent, never refusing to help any-

one in distress. To quote Mr. Cobbold: "The writer of these pages knew Colson well. He has often as a boy been in a boat with him, and always found him kind and gentle."

The old man's mania was probably only an exaggeration of the belief of his time or at any rate of his youth. He was a firm believer in wizards and witchcraft. He fancied himself surrounded by evil spirits. He knew their names, their propensities, how they afflicted men, and his great study was to prevent their malign influence. His trust in charms was absolute, and his whole body was hung with amulets, rings, bones of horses, verses, etc., each of which he declared to be efficacious against a certain spirit. If he lost one of his many charms, he believed himself specially liable to attack by the demon, against whom it was a prophylactic. That he had learned much from folklore is evident from the fact that though often

questioned about the different demons who tormented him, he never deviated from his ordinary account of them; and no one ever found him tripping as to their names or attributes. Though subject to hallucinations, he must have learned his demonology somewhere; and there seems to me little doubt that among the less educated folk in East Anglia there was, down to the end of the eighteenth century, a belief and a knowledge of the different powers of evil little different from that of the Middle Ages or the days when witchcraft was dreaded by all the inhabitants of England of every class.[1]

The primitive character of rural life at a comparatively late period is seen in the admirable description of Mr. Tovell's house in the Life of the Poet Crabbe, written by his son, which fully attests the accuracy of his younger contemporary — Mr. Cobbold.

[1] Mr. Cobbold in a private document says that Colson derived his knowledge of the names of demons from Glanvil's *Sadducismus Triumphatus*. I looked over the book and found no names of demons.

Mr. Tovell, whose property Mrs. Crabbe inherited, was a yeoman farmer possessed of a very considerable freehold property whose income, £800 ($4000), for those days was considerable. A landowner of such comparative wealth in the eighteenth century might well aspire to a place among the gentry of the county, but Mr. Tovell possessed a sturdy independence which forbade him taking any position in which he might feel himself ill at ease. A yeoman he was by education and such he was determined to remain: "Jack," he said, "will never make a gentleman." Nevertheless, says Mr. Crabbe, he possessed a native dignity of his own. The following is a description of his and his worthy wife's menage at Parham. I quote somewhat at length.

"His house was large and the surrounding moat, the rookery, the ancient dovecot, and the well-stored fishponds were such as might have suited a gentleman's seat of some

consequence; but one side of the house immediately overlooked the farm-yard, full of all sorts of domestic animals and the scene of constant bustle and noise. On entering the house, there was nothing at first sight to remind one of the farm: a spacious hall paved with black and white marble, etc., etc. But the drawing room, a corresponding dining parlour, and a handsome sleeping apartment upstairs, were all *tabooed* ground, and made use of on great and solemn occasions only — such as rent days and an occasional visit with which Mr. Tovell was honoured by a neighbouring peer. At all other times the family and their visitors lived entirely in the old-fashioned kitchen along with the servants. My great-uncle occupied an arm chair. . . . Mrs. Tovell sat at a small table, on which, in the evening stood one small candle in an iron candlestick . . .; in winter a noble block of wood, sometimes the whole circumference of a pollard, threw its com-

fortable warmth and cheerful blaze over the whole apartment.

"At a very early hour in the morning, the alarm called the maids and their mistress also: . . . After the important business of the dairy and a hasty breakfast, their respective employments were again resumed: that which the mistress took for her especial privilege being the scrubbing of the floors of the state-apartments."

Once a new servant was found doing this, and thus spoke the good lady: "*You* wash such floors as these? Give me the brush this instant and troop to the scullery and wash that, madam. . . . As true as G—d's in heaven, here comes Lord Rochford to call on Mr. Tovell. Here, take my mantle (a blue woollen apron), and I'll go to the door."

The family dined together — the heads sat at the old kitchen table — the maids at a side table, called a bouter, the farm men

stood in the scullery. With the principals at the table any stranger who happened to come in dined, even if he was a travelling ratcatcher, tinker, or farrier. "My father," Mr. Crabbe goes on to say, "well describes in the 'Widow's Tale,' my mother's situation when living in her younger days at Parham:

"But when the men beside their stations took,
The maidens with them, and with these the cook;
When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,
Filled with huge balls of farinaceous food;
With bacon, mass saline! where never lean
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen:
When from a single horn the party drew
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;
When the coarse cloth, she said, with many a stain,
Soil'd by rude hands who cut and came again;
She could not breathe, but, with a heavy sigh,
Reined the fair neck, and shut the offended eye;
She minced the sanguine flesh in pastimes fine
And wondered much to see the *creatures* dine."

Then Mr. Crabbe goes on to describe Mr. Tovell's cronies, who came after dinner, and enjoyed their punch, prosperous farmers or wealthy yeomen like himself. Their talk

was at times too much for Mrs. Tovell, who withdrew; but "the servants, being considered much in the same point of view as the animals dozing on the hearth, remained."

The life of Crabbe the poet as told by his son is an admirable piece of biography, and the Rev. George Crabbe, junr., was to my mind at least as good a realist in prose as his father in poetry. I wonder if I am right in conjecturing that you in New England had at the same time old farmers not very unlike Mr. Tovell who lived in prosperous simplicity like the old Suffolk Yeoman, rough in manner, coarse in expression, and blunt in sensibility, yet with an honest independence of character which redeemed much which to our eyes may seem repulsive.[1]

But the object of my remarks in this lecture has been to endeavour to give you an

[1] I have been privileged to see kitchens in old houses in New England, which must have been used in very much the same way as Mr. Tovell's. The house now preserved by the Colonial Dames at Quincy is a good example.

idea of what England, or part of it, was like about 1800; because I have another side of the picture to shew in my next lecture. The primitive simplicity of the peasant and the farmer was doomed to disappear, and the process had already begun. Still, side by side with a luxurious civilisation there were many traces of a roughness belonging to an early period in human development. To bring these facts into light, I do not think that the choice of my native county of Suffolk is a bad one.

When we turn from the peasant and trader, who in those days had little influence in controlling the country, to the classes which exercised power in the land, we come, as it were, to the surface of things; but, to use an agricultural metaphor, we cannot explain the crop without some knowledge of the soil. The explanation of many things, strange now to us in the most highly polished social circles, can be found in the character of the

middle and lower classes of the time. When we come in my next lecture to deal with academic life we shall find men of the highest intellect marked by much of the uncouthness of the people described by Crabbe or Cobbold, for many scholars had passed their early days in the same surroundings; and when we go a step higher and associate with the wits, dandies, and politicians of the Regency, I think we shall acknowledge that only a very thin crust of superficial polish lay between them and the people whom they affected to despise. But this similarity does not merely extend to the faults of society; it is to be found in its virtues also. There is no lack of virile strength in the characters to which I have drawn your attention to-day; their good qualities are as marked as their defects, and we recognise in nearly every one of them qualities which brought England safe through a great crisis in its history.

APPENDIX TO "MARGARET CATCHPOLE"

THE literary history of "Margaret Catchpole" is somewhat remarkable. The book was published as a true romance in 1845. It immediately attained widespread popularity and passed through several editions. It was dramatised in 1846 in London; and a play bill in the Harvard library shews that it was acted in the National Theatre, Boston, Mass., April 11 and 12, 1859. Mr. Richard Cobbold, the author, was involved in a dispute with Mr. Gedge, the editor of the *Bury Post*, on the historical accuracy of the story; both sides admitting that Margaret had married well in Australia, and that her son had visited Suffolk as a wealthy man desirous of purchasing an estate. The author nearly became involved in legal proceedings because a lady in Australia had been frequently mistaken for his heroine, and subjected to some annoyance on this account. In 1910 the story was again dramatised by the late Laurence Irving, and it was proved that Margaret Catchpole had died a spinster: the certificate of burial, dated 1819, being produced. This and the documents in the Ipswich Museum — viz. a letter written by her to Mrs. Cobbold when in prison, and a handbill offering a reward for her apprehension after her escape — give an unfavourable opinion of the accuracy of the author. The account of her arrest in the *Ipswich Journal* of April, 1800, makes no mention of the death of her smuggler lover. I have, however, through the kindness of Suffolk friends and my own relations dis-

covered the documents used by Mr. Richard Cobbold, which had been carefully filed by his mother; and I have seen the sketches he made (he was no mean artist) to illustrate the novel, with notes made by himself in his 77th year. He died in 1877. Upon the whole, I am convinced that, though he made some serious mistakes, especially about Margaret's age and marriage, he believed that he was writing a perfectly true account of her. The subject seemed to me of such interest to students of literary problems that I had the hardihood to submit it as a prelection to that respectable body the Council of the Senate of the University of Cambridge (England) under the title of "St. Luke as a Modern Author" (Cambridge: Heffer and Sons). If some of that august body considered the introduction of this romance in humble life as an illustration of a serious subject an impertinence, I can only tender my apologies. In America it has been suggested by many theological professors that "Margaret Catchpole" has a real bearing on the question of the composition of the Acts of the Apostles, and may prove a clue to that thorny problem, as well as to others which can be illustrated by the use of illiterate materials for literary purposes. Margaret's letters from Australia, despite the fact that she had been totally uneducated as a girl, are wonderfully interesting, and the naturalness of her style renders them far more readable than the polished periods which her biographer has put into her published letters.

LECTURE IV

Gunning's "Reminiscences of Cambridge"

An English University so closely connected with New England must have special interest to you. Yet those who have been to our Cambridge would find it indeed hard to recognise it in the place I am now about to put before you. It changed beyond recognition within the long lifetime of the author, whose reminiscences, put down during his long last illness, will be the text of my lecture. He had remarkable opportunities of observing University life, and many faculties of making the best of them. His hard shrewd face looks down upon us when we take our wine after dinner as guests in the combination room of Christ's College, and is an indication of his character. He was no

Boswell; for he lacked appreciation of the men he described and though capable of devoted friendship, had little affection for many of them. But he is an admirable raconteur with a shrewd eye for the absurdity of a situation, and will, I think, prove excellent company for us during the time at my disposal.

Many of my audience have doubtless visited our English Cambridge before this war broke out, and will be able to check the remarks I am about to make. An easy run from London brings the traveller to a railway station so inconvenient that it could only have been imagined in a bad dream; and he finds himself in the outskirts of a fair sized and rapidly increasing town.

A dull drive through a street of shops brings you to the colleges; and, if you happened to arrive at midday, you would find a stream of undergraduates in cap and gown with women students from Girton and Newnham issuing

from or flowing into the lecture rooms. Supposing your host to be in his college, you would find the courts populous with undergraduates, some in cap and gown, some in flannel blazers, and some, *proh pudor!* in evening pumps or even in carpet slippers. If you asked a question of one of them, you would be answered obligingly, if not with elaborate courtesy. Your host (a fellow of the college) would probably be working with a few pupils; and when they withdrew you would either be given lunch in his rooms or taken to his house. A few friends would be asked to meet you. The meal would be, I hope, a good one, and several would not even take the wine which was provided. Why I say this will appear later. If it were summer, you would have been taken for a walk in the "Backs," and have found the narrow river crowded with boats full of gaily flannelled men and a good many ladies; and, I think, you would

have admired the brightness of the scene. You might witness a cricket match, and, later in the evening, have watched the eights practising, with their coaches running, cycling, or riding beside them. If you dined in the college hall, you would find a good if not elaborate dinner neatly served; and the company, if not brilliant, would be at least variegated. In the combination room, over a modest glass of port and perhaps a cigar, the conversation would turn on many topics. The presiding fellow, who has been everywhere, would be laying down the law to a somewhat inattentive audience about hotels in Buda-Pesth and the old college friends he had met on the Yukon River. A famous man of letters would be giving his views on finance and town planning. A chemist and a mathematician would be absorbed in discussing bird life. A great authority on art might be explaining his views on the religion of the future to a D.D., who ought to know,

being by repute a heretic, but is somewhat inattentive as he is trying to listen, and at the same time endeavouring to explain to another man what are the prospects of the college boat. An anthropologist of European fame is being instructed by the junior fellow how the last fashionable dance ought to be performed; and the tutor, a silent man, suddenly breaks in with a question as to the progress of one of his pupils. Naturally the guest is not neglected; he would perhaps rather listen, especially as everyone is talking about something he does not make his specialty, as all sensible people do after dinner. It may be our supposed guest is taken to the Master's Lodge and finds several undergraduates on terms of easy familiarity with the "dons" and even with the, in old days unapproachable and awful, Head of the college. I am of course speaking of happier days before the War had depleted our numbers and when we all felt friendly and sociable.

In every scene in this imaginary sketch the contrast with Cambridge in the eighteenth century would be apparent. Except for parts of the buildings all is changed. In one respect the traveller who visited Cambridge a century ago would have had the advantage. Had he approached by either of the hills, by Madingley or the Gog Magogs, the town would have appeared more beautiful than now. Here is a description of his first view of the place by John Henry Newman in 1832, who was too great an admirer of the beauties of Oxford to fail to see how lovely was her rival:

"CAMBRIDGE, July 16th, 1832.

"Having come to this place with no anticipations, I am quite taken by surprise and overcome with delight. This, doubtless, you will think premature in me, inasmuch as I have seen yet scarcely anything, and have been writing letters of business to Mr. Rose and Rivingtons. But really, when I saw

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at the distance of four miles, on an extended plain, wider than Oxford, amid thicker and greener groves, the Alma Mater Cantabrigiensis lying before me, I thought I should not be able to contain myself, and in spite of my regret at her present defects and past history, and all that is wrong about her,[1] I seemed about to cry *Floreat in eternum.* Surely there is a *genius loci* here, as in my own dear home; and the nearer I came to it, the more I felt its power. I do really think the place finer than Oxford, though I suppose it isn't, for everyone says so. I like the narrow streets; they have a character, and they make the University buildings look larger by contrast. I cannot believe that King's College is not far grander than anything with us; the stone, too, is richer, and the foliage more thick and encompassing. I found my way from the town to

[1] He means that Cambridge was, and always had been, Liberal and Protestant.

Trinity College like old Œdipus, without guide, by instinct; how, I know not. I never studied the plan of Cambridge."

Ill paved, ill drained as was the town, narrow as were the streets, it must have been picturesque to the eye, and the colleges, unspoiled by modern additions, are very attractive, to judge by the old prints. On the whole, however, I think our verdict would have been that old Cambridge was a pleasanter place for us to explore than for its inhabitants to live in.

Let us now exercise our imagination a little more and try to fancy what a day spent in Cambridge would have been like to a stranger towards the close of the eighteenth century. One thing, I think, may be assumed to be unaltered. Had he come to visit a friend, he would have been hospitably received. Let us suppose that he also arrived at midday in summer when it was full term and that, to quote Wordsworth, he —

"At the Hoop alighted . . . famous inn."

He certainly would not have met a troop of young men, let alone maidens, going in and out of lecture. The lectures were over: and the lecture rooms were never crowded. Perhaps some noisy fellow-commoners might have stared and jeered at him and quite possibly have insulted him. Most colleges were very empty of students, many rather dilapidated. He would have dined in the middle of the day, and the hall would have been hot, noisy, and probably ill ordered. Joints were passed from one diner to another and carved according to taste. At the high table, where he would dine, would be the resident fellows, a stray nobleman or so, and a few rich young men, called fellow-commoners. A good deal of beer would be drunk, and most of the company would be rather cross and sleepy after the meal. The fellows, who were nearly all clergymen, would show themselves obsequious to the noble-

men, uneasily familiar with the fellow-commoners, and completely oblivious of the scholars and pensioners, who dined at the lower table, and of the sizars, or poor scholars, who, in some cases (certainly at an earlier date), waited on them, and after dinner ate what had been left on the high table. There were no games to watch: and in the afternoon probably our guest would be mounted and taken for a ride. In the evening supper would be served and perhaps a considerable amount of wine drunk in the combination room. As political feeling ran high at the time, the company would probably have quarrelled. Very few fellows had ever left their native country. A few had hardly known any places save their homes and their University.

Some must have been strangely uncouth in manner and appearance. Most of them were, as I have said, clergymen, and, of course, bachelors; but their practice of celibacy

was not always such as to fulfil the ideals of the advocates of that holy state in the days of the saints. But we have not yet finished our day. Supper would have been followed by an adjournment to a small, dirty, ill-lighted public house, and the walk home to bed might not be inaptly compared to the convolutions of a corkscrew.

That such was the University in the days of our author I fancy some extracts from the book before me will convince you. He admits that in his youthful days Cambridge had sunk lower than it ever had before, and he trusted that such days as his might never recur.

We have kept him waiting too long. Let me present to you Henry Gunning, Esquire Bedel of the University of Cambridge. He tells us he was a son of a clergyman in the neighbourhood and the descendant of "that admirable prelate," Dr. Peter Gunning, Bishop of Ely in the reign of Charles II. He entered

Christ's College in 1784, and died in 1855, well over eighty years of age, after a life spent in the University. During his long last illness he dictated his reminiscences.[1] He had, at an earlier period written some memoirs; but, on reflection, after a serious illness he had decided to burn all the papers. In his own words:

"I kept an account of the decision of the Heads on any disputed point. . . . My notes became much swelled by rumours of *jobbing* among the higher powers, which, though sometimes defeated, were generally so skilfully conducted that they more frequently succeeded. I had collected sufficient materials for publishing a pretty large volume, but was about that time attacked by a sudden and dangerous illness, which afforded more

[1] A series of letters by Gunning's devoted nurse, Miss Mary Beart, was published in the *Cambridge Review* by Mr. A. T. Bartholomew, of the University Library, and has been reprinted. His "Reminiscences" were not received with favor by the authorities: only one Head of a house, Dr. Benedict Chapman, Master of Caius, appears among the subscribers.

opportunity for serious reflection than I had before accustomed myself to. . . . I was apprehensive that I might have inserted some things (which I believed to be facts) upon questionable authority. . . . I feared that the papers might fall into the hands of some bookseller whose only object would be gain, to obtain which he would not scruple to whitewash men whose characters ought to have been drawn in the darkest colours, or to speak in extremely harsh terms of others on whose eccentricities I only wished to pass a slight censure. Too ill to admit of delay, I decided on committing all my papers to the flames, nor did I for fifty years regret the step." Gunning died before his task was completed: his memoirs terminated abruptly; but the most interesting part of his work has happily survived, and the earlier reminiscences, as is customary with the aged, are more full and vivid than the later.

I shall not attempt to moralise or discant much upon his story; but I intend to give it in his own words with a few remarks in passing.

Henry Gunning entered Christ's College as a sizar, a poor scholar who was at one time supposed to be fed by what was left of the meals provided for the fellows (a Christ's College sizar being the equivalent of a "servitor" at Oxford), though Gunning says nothing of this.[1] As we shall see, he led anything but the life of a humble dependant whilst at the University. His college had been and now is among the most distinguished at Cambridge. It had produced John Milton and Ralph Cudworth, and had been a famous centre of the intellectual life of the

[1] The practice of sizars waiting in Hall on the fellows seems to have been discontinued at an early date. Dr. Bass Mullinger alludes to complaints made in the seventeenth century that servants were taking the place of poor scholars. To Dr. T. G. Bonney of St. John's I owe many valuable hints on this and other subjects of a kindred nature. His "A Septuagenarian's Recollections of St. John's," printed in the *Eagle*, the College Magazine, June, 1909, was most useful to me.

seventeenth century. It was the college of William Paley, who was Senior Wrangler in 1763, and it was destined to be the school of many a famous man, among them Charles Darwin. But only three men entered with our hero in 1785.

The two tutors, Mr. Parkinson and Mr. Seale, were in a sense men of mark. The former had been disappointed in failing to be elected Master; and was engaged to a very beautiful young lady, whose numerous admirers made him at times uncomfortable. As Mr. Parkinson had an eighteen-mile ride to get to his lady-love, he lectured in cap and gown, but also booted and spurred, and snubbed young Gunning when he asked for explanations of difficult points in the lecture.

Accordingly his pupil gave up lectures and decided not to read at all; but at the end of the term the tutor spoke most kindly and encouragingly, as an old friend of his pupil's father. The result was that Gunning

became, for a time at least, a reading man, and was much encouraged by his friend Hartley, a Yorkshireman who shewed him the solution of the difficulties which Parkinson was too impatient to explain. When Parkinson examined Gunning he found that his progress was most satisfactory, encouraged him most kindly to persist; and when Gunning told him of a man who was reputed to read twelve hours a day in hopes of surpassing the expected Senior Wrangler, he remarked, "If he mean to beat him he had better devote six hours to reading and six hours to reflecting on what he has read."

Seale, the other tutor, was a good teacher and a really humorous lecturer. "Nothing could be pleasanter than the hour passed at his lecture, such was his kindness to all. . . . When any ludicrous blunder occurred . . . he joined in the laugh as heartily as any of us." Seale seems to have been a very able scholar, but somewhat quarrelsome:

he became chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury; but had to resign because he quarrelled with the butler about the wine supplied at the chaplains' table. However, Gunning had nothing to complain of in regard to the education he got from his college.

He was not always a close student; and both his diversions and his friends are more interesting in illustrating his times, than are his tutors or his reading. May I for a moment digress and explain the constitution of the University? Except for a very few professors and the officials — Vice-Chancellor, Proctors, Taxors, and Moderators, etc. — the University was practically non-existent. The colleges did virtually all the teaching and were self-contained bodies.[1]

A man got little or no instruction outside his own college; the University examined him and gave him his degree — that was all.

[1] The colleges were everything, the University a mere degree-giving Corporation, says the late Mr. J. W. Clark in his "Memories and Customs" (1820–1860), reprinted from the *Cambridge Review*, 1909.

The real rulers of the University were the Masters of the colleges. Most of them were highly placed ecclesiastics, and, consequently, had frequently to be absent from Cambridge; but as the "Heads" might marry, and fellows had to resign their position on taking a wife, they constituted a permanent element, and became all-powerful. I myself have often heard stories of the time when the Master of a college, and his family, belonged to an aristocracy to which no ordinary Master of Arts could hope to be admitted; and, you may be sure, the ladies who reigned in the lodges were very careful to keep the wives and daughters of such married graduates as happened to live in the town at their proper distance. Gunning will have plenty to say about them. The fellows of the colleges were for the most part non-resident; only the tutors and a few old men resided with any permanence in the colleges. With a few exceptions the fellows who stayed in

Cambridge were either very young men or very strange old bachelors who seldom left the town. What instruction was given was given by the college tutors, and most of the fellows who lived in Cambridge served as curates to the different village churches. Some were almost entirely idle men, and one, who shall be nameless, found them no little mischief to do.

The fellows dined at the high table, to which the nobility were also admitted. Noblemen, *i.e.* peers, the eldest sons of peers, and men who could prove royal descent, had till comparatively recently had the right of proceeding to the degree of M.A. after two years of residence without taking any examination or the degree of B.A. In Gunning's early days peers wore on state occasions a magnificent academical dress varying in colour according to taste. Then came the fellow-commoners, men of wealth, who paid far higher fees than the ordinary students

and dined with the fellows. These were also distinguished by the magnificence of their academic attire. It is difficult to imagine a much worse system of education. The nobility and fellow-commoners were kept apart from the ordinary men, often grossly flattered by the fellows and even by the Masters of the colleges. Work was not expected of them, and their example was often pernicious alike to the students and to the younger fellows. The majority of the young men were classed as scholars, who with the fellows formed what is called the "society" of the colleges, pensioners, and sizars or servitors. Almost all were intending to take Holy Orders: a few, however, became barristers or medical practitioners. The University was very small. In 1748 there were only 1500 on the books of the colleges; this includes non-residents, who were almost certainly in the majority. In 1801 the total of residents in the University, in-

cluding, I suppose, the servants who slept in college, was 803.

Gunning certainly kept good company, and this is how he enjoyed himself. He was a keen sportsman, and Cambridge afforded excellent opportunity for him to indulge his taste. The fenlands were not preserved and abounded with waterfowl. Young lads and boys were always ready to carry the game and to provide poles to leap the fen ditches. The fishing was excellent, and so both summer and winter could be fully occupied by the sportsman. We hear nothing of any games or athletics from Gunning. Everybody rode, but there was apparently no hunting. Here is a riding story told by Mr. Gunning. Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, was remarkable for holding many posts simultaneously and of impartially neglecting the duties of all. Yet he possessed undoubted gifts, and his was the only criticism of Gibbon's famous chapters about the rise of

Christianity which the historian deemed worthy of his attention. He took a high degree in 1759 and five years later became Professor of Chemistry. For two years he held the chairs of Chemistry and Divinity together; and for thirty-two years he was Bishop of Llandaff, and Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, discharging the duties of both offices from his house in the Lake district in the North of England. Apropos of this house in Westmorland, Gunning tells a good story. The proprietor of the Cock Inn out of compliment to Dr. Watson changed the name of his hostelry to the "Bishop's Head" and painted his Lordship on the sign-board. The ostler, who had saved money, built a rival hotel which he called "The Cock." Thereupon the landlord of the "Bishop's Head," finding custom leaving him, put an inscription under the portrait, "This is the Old Cock."

Dr. Watson's deputy professor was Dr.

Kipling, who was very unpopular from the way in which he held aloof from the undergraduates, so the young men resolved to have their revenge. Dr. Kipling's principal recreation, to quote our author, "was a daily ride to the hills, which at that time was the most frequented road among members of the University. Returning one day, he picked up an ostrich feather which he saw drop from the hat of a lady, who was proceeding very slowly about fifty yards in advance.

"On overtaking her he presented the feather, accompanied by an expression relative to the good fortune in being able to restore it. The lady thanked him for his kindness, and, expressing her annoyance that her servant was not in attendance, said she had just left General Adeane's. . . . The Doctor begged her not to be uneasy, as he should have much pleasure in attending her until her servant appeared. They had not pro-

ceeded far before they began to meet parties of young men who were going out for their morning's ride. From the significant glances that were exchanged between the parties Dr. Kipling could not fail to discover he had got into bad company. That he might rid himself of his new acquaintance, . . . he clapped spurs to his horse, which had been selected with his well-known Yorkshire discernment. The lady was well mounted, and applying her whip briskly kept up with the Doctor." Thus they rode together through the town, and the story was long related in the University. The lady's name was Jemima Watson. No relation to the Bishop and Professor of that name! You will, I think, see that Mr. Gunning had a keen eye for character and no little malice; and I propose to deal with some of the strange personalities of the time depicted by him.

On taking a very good degree, our author might reasonably have looked for a fellow-

ship, but this was not possible because "his county" was already in possession of one. I may explain that it was the law that at a small college like Christ's the fellows should be so selected that no two persons born in the same county should be on the list together. This was intended to protect a college from being monopolised by a single county, by the fellows choosing their friends. But at this time the office of Esquire Bedel was vacant, and Gunning was elected to it. The Vice-Chancellor at this time was attended on all ceremonial occasions by three Esquire Bedels and also by Yeoman Bedels. The former officers still exist, but their number has been reduced to two. Gunning's colleagues were Mr. William Mathew, Senior Fellow and Bursar of Jesus College, and the famous Mr. Beverley, of Gunning's own college. Mathew, an excellent man, gave his friend the following description of the duties of his office. They were first *carving* at the

Vice-Chancellor's table, and in this Beverley was unrivalled and always kept the best slices for himself.

Second only to the art of carving was the practice of *punctuality*, which was thus defined: "The statutes of the University enjoin the Respondent to dispute from the *first* to the *third* hour. The authorities consider the statutes to be complied with provided the Disputant is in the box *before* the clock strikes *two* and does not leave it until after it has struck three. . . . There are other points of practice which are soon learned." As says Gunning, "most of them were founded on *a violation of the statutes*. I inserted them in a memorandum book."

The senior Esquire Bedel was Mr. Beverley, a most remarkable man. Gunning hated him with all his heart and introduces him in these words:

"If his own account of himself is to be believed (and perhaps *in this instance* his

word may be taken), he was the most profligate man in the University. He obtained his office by the influence of the famous Lord Sandwich, the friend and betrayer of Wilkes, immortalised as Jenny Twitcher. Beverley had a large family, borrowed from everybody, and cheated all he could. Lord Sandwich entertained magnificently at Hinchinbrooke Castle, about fourteen miles from Cambridge, and Beverley was not above procuring invitations for members of the University who paid him."

He must have had many attractive qualities and was a good musician. People were always trying to get him out of debt, especially Mr. Basil Montagu, a son of Lord Sandwich.

Montagu collected money to free him from his pressing liabilities and then invited Beverley to tea and read him a long lecture on his extravagance. Poor Beverley departed in tears, not having been told what his

benefactor intended to do. Montagu felt he had been too severe and feared that Beverley might give way to despair and even kill himself. But, instead of finding the prodigal a corpse, he heard sounds of music if not of dancing, and found his volatile friend seated at his table with a bowl of punch and several boon companions. "After this exhibition Montagu troubled himself no further about Beverley's debts."

A notable character of the time was a certain Jimmy Gordon, who had fallen from a position of affluence to one of extreme degradation.[1] Seeing the Master of Trinity, who was also Bishop of Bristol, Gordon begged of him. His Lordship replied, "If you can find a greater scoundrel than yourself, I will give you a half a crown." Off went Gordon and told Beverley that the Master wished to speak to him. The Master, when

[1] Gordon is introduced by Lord Lytton in one of his novels — I think "Pelham."

Beverley came, remarked, "You have been misinformed, Mr. Beverley." Up came Jimmy at this moment and said, "I think, my lord, I am entitled to my half crown."

I feel I must relate one more example of Beverley's behaviour. On Midlent Sunday it was customary for the Vice-Chancellor to drive in state and preach in the church at Burwell and be accompanied by one or more of the Esquire Bedels. After the sermon they all dined at a farmer's house and so enjoyed the ale and port wine that they did not go and hear the vicar at afternoon service. "What sort of preacher is Mr. Turner?" asked the Vice-Chancellor. "For my own part," replied the tenant, "I would not go over the threshold to hear him preach." "If that be your opinion, who have had frequent opportunities of hearing him, I am of that opinion too; and we will remain and have a few more glasses of your fine old port." Needless to remark, the clergyman

was furious at the having been thus neglected. On the way back to Cambridge a Mr. Hole, who was acting as a deputy Bedel, attacked Mr. Beverley, who had a good deal of wit, and gave him more than he got. Then the Vice-Chancellor tried to defend Mr. Hole, and he too got more than he bargained for. So he stopped the carriage and told Beverley to go and sit on the box. The Bedel refused, and told the other two that they had better get out and walk home. "They declined to follow this advice," and "it was not long before perfect quiet reigned among them, and the university Marshal who acted as Vice-Chancellor's servant imagined (and it was not a *very improbable* conclusion) that they had been overtaken by the drowsy god."

A more reputable but still very striking character was Dr. Milner, the President of Queen's College. His portrait is one I often study when I dine there. A portly man in his red gown and doctor's wig, he sits

grasping the arms of his chair, looking very strong and masterful. In politics a strong Tory, attached by religious sympathy to the evangelical party, editor of the "Church History" of his brother, from his force of character and his mathematical ability Milner was long the ruler of the University. Caring nothing for public opinion, he would have his own way; and he is reported to have once exclaimed, when settling a man's place in an examination and the man's tutor exclaimed, "Surely you do not say that A is better than B?" "I never said he was the better man; I said he should stand above him." It was the custom for the moderators who conducted the Tripos and made out the lists to submit any doubtful cases to some great mathematician, who held a *viva voce* examination; and, as Milner's undoubted ability made his judgment of great value, he was often called to do this. Except where men of his own college or Magdalene, a great centre

of evangelicalism, were concerned, his judgment was excellent; but Gunning considers that he was quite unscrupulous when his partiality or interest led him to decide a point. Milner, though an ardent pietist and a valetudinarian, was somewhat notorious for the joviality of his supper parties, at which the bowl circulated freely and the fun was fast and furious. His powerful personality dominated the University, as may be seen from the fact that he did his best to stop the reform of Trinity College. In his account of this Mr. Gunning draws a striking picture of the Seniority of the college in the closing years of the eighteenth century. By its statutes Trinity was practically governed by the Master and the ten Senior Fellows, the latter men who had lived for years in the college without generally doing any work, being content with holding their fellowship and living in celibate idleness. Their power was great; and, as it may well be supposed,

they were not as a rule qualified to exercise it, especially when they claimed a right to select the fellows themselves without regard to the reports of the examiners. The tutors fought a hard battle to remove this abuse and were taunted by Milner and the Tory party with being Jacobites and supporters of the French Revolution. The matter was decided in the courts, and the tutors won, with the result that a fellowship at Trinity became, in Macaulay's words, a veritable "patent of nobility."

I abbreviate Gunning's description of the Seniority partly from a sense of propriety.

The Rev. Stephen Whiston, B.D., was, says our author, "I believe a very respectable man."

The Rev. Samuel Backhouse, B.D., kept a girls' school at a village called Balsham.

"Was it profit that he sought?
No; he paid them to be taught.
Had he honour for his aim?
No; he *blushed to find it fame.*"

The Rev. Samuel Peck, B.D., must have been rather a nice old man. He was a great authority on village law and helped the country people gratis, saying, "Sam Peck never takes a fee, but he loves gratitude," and the farmers paid him in presents of the produce of their land. He played a very clever trick upon Gunning's old tutor Seale by persuading him to share the expenses of treating two ladies on a journey from London to Cambridge, who turned out to be his own cook and waitress![1]

The Rev. Thomas Wilson, B.D., had to have his garden key taken away because he was rude to the Master's wife one dark evening when she was returning from a party.

The Rev. John Higgs, B.D., and the Rev. Thomas Spencer, B.D., were unknown to Gunning. Mr. Spencer was mad, and only came to Cambridge when his vote was

[1] A caricature of Mr. Peck is preserved in the combination room, Trinity College. He is riding a pony laden with farm produce.

wanted. The Rev. William Collier, B.D., was a well-known gourmand. He is recorded to have eaten three-quarters of a sucking pig and to have left the rest because he was engaged to dine immediately after. He was a Hebrew scholar, a good classic, and a modern linguist. The Rev. James Lambert was an excellent sportsman and was supposed to be unorthodox. "Lambert was never addicted to those vices for which at that time the Seniors of Trinity were so notorious, but when in college attended closely to literary pursuits." He was Professor of Greek.

Observe, except Lambert all were B.D.'s. Here is an epitaph:

> "Here lies a Fellow of Trinity.
> He was a Doctor of Divinity.
> He knew as much about Divinity
> As other Fellows do of Trinity."

My last character shall be Dr. Farmer, Master of Emmanuel, a most amiable and delightful man. We make his acquaintance

as curate of the parish of Swavesey, a village with a most beautiful church, then a place much larger and more prosperous than it is at present. Almost all the parishes around Cambridge were served by fellows of the colleges, who went over on Sunday to take the prayers, and they were rarely visited on any other day by a clergyman. Sunday was a great day in the colleges, as these clergymen met after its labours, and ate most jovial suppers. Farmer was regarded as a model of punctiliousness in the performance of his duties, as he made a point of never missing a Sunday at Swavesey and of dining after service at the inn, to which meal he usually invited one or more of the farmers. He then rode back to Cambridge, slept an hour or so, and appeared in the Emmanuel "parlour," where he was the delight of the whole party. People used to come for the week end from London for the pleasure of hearing Farmer's conversation; and Mr. Pitt was much at-

tached to him. He was fond of rushing up to London to dine; and one Ash Wednesday morning he announced to his Vice-Chancellor that he had to make haste to get to the University church in time, for at "three o'clock this morning I was blowing my pipe with the worshipful company of pewterers." Dr. Farmer became Master of Emmanuel; and Gunning suggests that he might have become Head of Trinity for the asking; but when Mr. Pitt sought his advice as to whom he should choose, he simply replied, "If you want to oblige the society, appoint Postelthwaite." He was a great admirer of Shakespeare, and never missed a performance when a play of his was acted.

But we must leave these quaint personages for a more general view of the life of the University. It had its splendid as well as its sordid side. Dress, as I have already hinted, played a great part in the pageant of the old place. Here is Gunning's descrip-

tion of the fêtes at Commencement at the end of the summer term:

"On Commencement Sunday, the college walks were crowded. Every doctor of the University wore his scarlet robes during the whole day. Every nobleman wore his splendid robes, not only in St. Mary's and in the college halls, but also in the public walks. Their robes (which are now uniformly purple) were at that time of various colours according to the taste of the wearers; purple, white, green, and rose colour were to be seen at the same time."

There was also a good deal of ceremonial at other times; and the barbaric was occasionally mingled with the magnificent, as, for example, at the opening of Stourbridge Fair. This Fair, now a poor and insignificant gathering, was once the most famous in England and had ranked among the great fairs of Europe. In Gunning's early days much of its splendour remained. At its opening the Vice-

Chancellor with his Bedels and Commissary, the Registrary, the Proctors, and the Taxors, met in the Senate House at eleven, where everybody drank sherry and ate cakes. After this all drove to the Common, and the Vice-Chancellor proclaimed the Fair to be open, the Yeomen Bedels on horseback repeating his words at different parts of the assembly. Then followed a devouring of oysters in what was known as the Tiled Booth, after which the University magnates strolled about the Fair till dinner was ready. It was no easy task to get into the dining-room, because the people outside would not budge to allow the procession to pass, the University being very unpopular because they supplied the mugs in which the beer was sold and these held notoriously short measure. This was the only effort in the direction of temperance we meet with at this period, and that was dishonest. The dinner consisted of boiled pork, herrings, goose, apple-pie, and beef.

The wine was bad, but everyone enjoyed himself, despite the heat and discomfort of the Tiled Booth. At half-past six they all went to the theatre. How they got home is not recorded!

Of intellectual pursuits Gunning has little to record. The disputations for degrees continued from the Middle Ages, in which he took part frequently as disputant and, knowing the rules of logic, he was often able to overthrow men of admittedly more learning than himself. There were good scholars and learned men at Cambridge; but we hear more of their schemes, their quarrels, and their amours than of their achievements in the schools.

Porson, the most famous Grecian since Bentley, is hardly if ever mentioned!

It is a strange record of the days of old, and the Cambridge therein described seems to have been in another world than this. Yet some of us were alive when Henry Gun-

ning died, and I can myself remember characters almost as strange as he depicts. But in all the book there is no one so strange as the writer himself. In it we have the record, not of a diarist, but of an old, old man in his last illness, a man by his own account not devoid of piety or good feeling, yet recollecting every slight, every injury, he had sustained nearly sixty years before, the dislikes of his youth for men long gone to their account being as green and vigorous as they were when he first formed them. One cannot even like him, but nevertheless it is impossible to deny that he can not only amuse but instruct, and that much would have been forgotten but for his dictated notes about the Cambridge of his youth.

It was a nobler University before that age, and it has risen perhaps even to greater heights since. Gunning saw the University of Beverley and the Seniors of Trinity shine once more as the University of Whewell

and Macaulay, of Darwin, Tennyson, and scores of great and good men.[1]

That the improvement in days to come may equal if not surpass that which Gunning witnessed is the prayer of him who has made the "Reminiscences" the subject of this lecture.

[1] In justice to Gunning it ought to be said that men like Adam Sedgewick, the great geologist, regarded him with affection, and during his long illness the lady who attended him as nurse was devoted to him; and her record of the patience with which the old man bore his sufferings referred to above, deserves to be read by those who would form a fair estimate of his character. But whilst not denying my author all good qualities, I maintain that he not only depicts but represents an age singular for its coarseness of feeling and absence of ideals; though, to do him justice, he shewed himself a consistent opponent of the evils of his time in Cambridge.

LECTURE V

Creevey Papers — The Regency

It is time we entered better society than we have been in for the last few lectures. Of course much depends on the meaning of the word "better." I do not think we need attach any moral significance to it. Let me at once admit that by better, I mean more select, or, perhaps, "exclusive" is the right term. For most people in the time of which I am about to treat it was necessary to be born to good society in order to obtain an entrance to it. Yet there were exceptions. Whilst there were men like Brougham whose genius compelled recognition, though they were made to feel that they neither were nor could be members of the inner circle; there were others, without even his social

qualifications, who took their place therein and made themselves felt and even feared by the highest in the land. Such a man was the author of the papers from which I shall borrow so much to-day; nor can we forget that the rival in *ton* to the Prince Regent himself, the first gentleman in Europe, was Brummell, the tradesman's son.

The subject of my remarks to-day will be at first mainly political, not that I have any desire to raise controversial questions; but one is bound to do so, when speaking of English life during the great war with Napoleon, which bears so striking an analogy to the present. There is a marked tendency to-day to say that the conduct of our statesmen and of society in general contrasts unfavourably with that of men of a century ago; and I think I shall be able to prove conclusively that, under very different conditions the passions of men are much the same as formerly, and that, if the advantage is on either side,

it is with the present rather than with the past.

I feel I have set myself a very difficult task in attempting to define a Whig in the later years of George III.

The strength of the party was the new aristocracy created by Henry VIII with the spoils of the monasteries, of which the Cavendishs, Russells, and other houses were the leaders.[1] They were naturally strongly Protestant: and their immense power dates from the Revolution in 1688. Their rivals, the Tories, were in opposition till the accession of George III; and, as their sympathies were all on the side of the exiled Roman Catholic Stuarts, they had little or no influence. When, however, George III, a prince born in England, ascended the throne, the Tories, who bore him no grudge for his treatment of the exiled royal family, rallied

[1] Disraeli's "Sybil" gives a scathing portraiture of the great Whig families in his sketch of the career of the Earls of Marney.

to the young monarch, who was resolved not to submit, as his grandfather had done, to the tyranny of the Whig oligarchy. Henceforward the Tories were on the side of the Crown, whilst their opponents resisted its encroachments. The revolt of the American colonies, provoked by Mr. Grenville's Stamp Act, made the Whigs oppose the King, who was determined to coerce his disaffected subjects. When the French Revolution broke out, this party sympathised with the republicans; and were opposed to the war which began in 1792. Their following consisted of the dissenters and intellectuals: the former drawing their strength from the commercial classes, and the latter consisting of young men, enamoured with the cult of reason and extremely susceptible to new ideas. The bulk of the nation, however, the Church, the country gentry, the farmers, profiting by war prices, and even the lower orders, was Tory. The non-aristocratic members of the Whig

party were often great sufferers. They were exposed to mob violence, as in the case of Dr. Priestley, to social ostracism, and to vindictive prosecutions by the government. But the great houses maintained their position and were too strongly entrenched in it to be seriously disturbed.

Thus we have the spectacle of liberal ideas being championed by a coterie of great families, haughty, withdrawn from common folk, and so exclusive that it was almost impossible to gain admission to their circle. Hereditary exercise of power extending over fully a century made them skilled politicians; and when they recruited talent from the middle classes, the Whigs made their allies feel their dependence upon the ruling caste. Neither the philosophy of Edmund Burke in one generation, nor the versatility of Henry Brougham in another, prevented either from the sense of being in a state of dependence on their patrons.

One man, however, without the advantages of birth or wealth, enjoyed the privilege of moving freely in this charmed circle, in the person of Mr. Creevey, whose memoirs only appeared in 1903. His editor, Sir Herbert Maxwell, describes his abilities as hardly of the second order, but I must confess that, considering the position he occupied in the party, I cannot share his opinion. Married to a Mrs. Orde and apparently living on his wife's moderate fortune, sitting for Thetford, a close borough of the Duke of Norfolk's, and after his wife's death subsisting on an income of £200 ($1000) a year, he never stooped to flatter, gave his advice without fear or favour, and, when the Duke put him out of his seat in the House of Commons, wrote the head of the English peerage a letter which shewed that he looked on his patron as an equal who had treated him very shabbily. From the Duke's reply to "My dear Creevey" it is easy to see that his

Grace recognised that he had offended, not a humble dependant, but a man of great political and social influence.

I am now going to select a few passages dating from the rupture of the Peace of Amiens in 1803 and onwards, shewing how England was rent by faction, even in the most perilous days of the war with Napoleon. Remember that often the country was fighting alone against perhaps the greatest genius the world has ever seen, and that her position at times appeared to be almost hopeless.

In 1804, when Buonaparte's camp was established at Boulogne ready for the invasion of England, party feeling ran extraordinarily high. Pitt was becoming impatient of the incompetence of his friend Addington; and, as a party manœuvre, he moved for an inquiry into the conduct of Admiral Lord St. Vincent and was supported by Fox. Creevey writes that he is convinced that the accused is innocent; but still he felt bound

to vote with Fox. "I am," he says, "more passionately attached every day to party. I am certain that without it nothing can be done." A month later the King's madness was coming on, and Creevey hopes that this attack will make an end of him as a ruler. "I hope that the Monarch is done and can no longer make ministers." Later on, the prospect of disaffection in Ireland fills Creevey with hopes that Pitt's position may become impossible; he says, "The country engaged in a new war unnecessarily undertaken and ungraciously entered upon, the Catholics discontented, and the Opposition unbroken. If such a combination of circumstances does not shake the Treasury bench, what can?" The next year, 1805 (Trafalgar), brings to Mr. Creevey and his friends the hope that Mr. Pitt may be exposed for lending Government money to a firm which had recently gone bankrupt. In 1808, when Sir Arthur Wellesley began his work in the Peninsula,

the convention of Cintra made him most unpopular; and the nation was, says Sir Herbert Maxwell, "almost unanimous in demanding his degradation if not his death." Mr. Whitbred writes to Mr. Creevey, "I grieve for the opportunity which has been lost of acquiring national glory, but I am not sorry to see the Wellesley pride a little lowered." The next year witnessed the lamentable failure of the Walcheren Expedition, and Wellesley's victory of Talavera. Captain Graham Moore, brother to Sir John Moore, writes to Creevey: "The Cannings are in a damned dilemma with this expedition and the victory of Talavera. They mean, I understand, to saddle poor Lord Chatham with the first, but who can they saddle the victory with? They cannot attack the Wellesleys as they did my poor brother. What a cursed set you (politicians) are." The passage of the Douro by Wellesley led to Mr. Whitbred addressing the General in most

complimentary terms; but the war occupied people's thoughts but little, the main interest being centred in the exposure of the scandalous sale of commissions in the army by Mrs. Clarke, a friend of the Duke of York's. Two years later, in 1811, Creevey takes encouragement from the number of sick in the army of Portugal and hopes it may bring about peace, and when the war in Spain was nearing its victorious conclusion a friend writes to him, abusing Wellington.

These remarks are indeed the mild utterances of leaders of a party more interested in disparaging their political opponents than in the progress of the war. When we turn to the extreme wing of the party we find Napoleon a hero and his defeat a calamity:

"But even with such mighty odds against him the towering and gigantic genius of Napoleon would have defied them all, if English money had not bribed some of his generals. It was this, and this only, that

completed his downfall. To talk of the Duke of Wellington as the conqueror of Napoleon is an insult to the understanding of any intelligent man; and for Lord Castlereagh to have boasted of having subdued him as his lordship was wont to do, was pitiful, was wondrous pitiful." So wrote Lady Ann Hamilton; in the same strain also at an earlier period spoke Mr. Fox of the virtues of his country's greatest and most determined enemy. It is thus that history repeats itself in the wars my country has waged in her long history.

I now pass to a character very different from Creevey's, to the man who ruled the fashionable world with an authority even more undisputed than that of the Prince of Wales, Beau Brummell, the prince of the dandies. The Beau had no advantages of birth and only a moderate fortune. It is often the custom to regard him as a mere coxcomb, the outcome of a frivolous society

fitted only to point a moral and adorn a tale. I venture to take a more charitable view of him and to give my opinion that he owed his ascendancy to something more than extravagance of dress and unbounded impudence.

To take but a single example: Everybody knows the story of Brummell walking with Lord Alvanley in the Park being cut by the Prince Regent and enquiring in an audible voice, "Who is your fat friend?" There is very little point in the remark except its offensiveness. But the biographer of Brummell, Captain Jesse, got the true version from a friend who witnessed the incident. It was not in the Park, but at a ball given by Brummell, Lord Alvanley, and two others. The Prince was not invited, because of his quarrel with Brummell; but, as everybody was going, he signified his pleasure to be present. When he arrived he greeted Lord Alvanley and his other two hosts, cutting

Brummell pointedly, thereby insulting one of his entertainers. The Prince had by a gross breach of good taste placed himself in an impossible position. If he did not know his host, his host had a right to regard him as an uninvited intruder; therefore the question was a snub, unanswerable even by the Regent. The life of Brummell is the record of much folly and frivolity, ending with a long exile in Calais, which terminated in imbecility and death in an almshouse. Nevertheless this famous dandy, fop though he was, is one of those butterflies whose useless lives at least add to the beauty of the scene. Nor is it for the recorder of his time to point the finger of scorn at him. Absurd as his ideal was, it was not wholly contemptible. His vanity was not malicious, he was at least no sycophant, he held his own among aristocrats, who were as vulgar as they were arrogant. He shamed his associates into decent manners, at a period when social polish was

hardly skin deep. He insisted on personal cleanliness in days when it was disregarded by the highest in the land. He had the art of making friends who stood by him in his hours of poverty and distress. The Duke of York, with all his faults the best liked son of George III, the Duchess, one of the most amiable ladies of the day, the Duke of Beaufort, and many others remained staunch to him as long as he lived. He was a sharer in the follies of his day, but so far as I know he was not so heartless in his vices as many a greater man; nor did he pander to the vices of others. We can laugh at his absurdities, without having that feeling of disgust with which we regard many of the faults of his august rival, the Prince Regent. How delightful, for example, is his criticism of the Duke of Bedford's coat! On one occasion his Grace asked the Beau his opinion of his new clothes. "Turn round," said Brummell, "now stand still." Then taking the garment by

the lapel, he exclaimed, "Oh, Bedford, do you call this a coat?"

The thing which strikes us most in connection with the halcyon period of the dandies, with its follies and lavish expenditure, is that it coincided with some of the most anxious days through which England ever passed, and with the age when distress and poverty were most keenly felt. Fashionable life was indeed fast and furious and characterised by its reckless extravagance. Everybody gambled: every possible event was made the subject of a bet. The turf was, as it is to-day, crowded with blacklegs; and the issue of a great fight in the prize ring was watched with more trembling anxiety than that of a battle in Spain or Flanders. The prevalence of drunkenness was universal; every memoir of the time records drinking-bouts innumerable. The fine gentleman garnished every sentence with an oath and even used bad language in his letters to his

friends. Duelling was universal. Pitt, the Duke of Wellington, Castlereagh, nearly all the leading statesmen, had to fight. Even the Duke of York, though very near the throne, 'met' the Duke of Richmond. But with all its failings the men of fashion had one merit: though they were almost incredibly coarse, brutal, and selfish, no one could reproach them with softness. They may have been bad, but they were men. If they went to see prize-fighters beat each other into a jelly, they were ready enough to use their fists themselves. If they gambled the cards and the dice, they did so at the risk of ending their days in a debtor's prison. Many of them died ruined in purse and bankrupt even of honour. If they pursued their amours unscrupulously, there was always the risk of facing an outraged relative's pistol. The spice of danger was never absent from their lives. One alone could share in all their pursuits, and be exempt from peril. He could

drink himself drunk without danger of his words being called in question; he could ruin wives and daughters and no one would raise a hand against him; he could engage in shady transactions on the turf, and men made it a point of honour to shield his fair fame. If others were extravagant, they dissipated their own patrimony; and when that was gone, there was nothing for it but to starve. But he had only to fall back on national resources, and the taxpayer extricated him from his difficulties. It is because of its immunity, that the profligacy of George, as Prince, as Regent, and as King is so detestable.

It has been customary, I think, to underrate his abilities. Thackeray has a most misleading passage about his relation with the Whigs. "At first he made a pretence of having Burke and Fox and Sheridan for his friends. But how could such men be serious before such an empty scapegrace as this

lad . . .; what had these men of genius in common with their tawdry young host of Carlton House? That fribble the leader of such men as Fox and Burke! That man's opinions about the constitution — about any question graver than the button of a waistcoat or the sauce of a partridge worth anything! The friendship between the Prince and the Whig Chiefs was impossible. They were hypocrites in pretending to respect him, and if he broke the hollow compact between them, who shall blame him?" But if we turn to Creevey, we shall see that George played the game with the Whigs with consummate skill. Not that he cared a straw for the constitution or political matters. He wanted leisure, comfort, influence, — above all, money. He used the Whigs for his purposes in the question of the Regency, and in order to extort money from the nation. They were ready enough to serve him in defeating Pitt and their other oppo-

nents; but he, once he was Regent in 1812, with his father, the old King, hopelessly insane, flung them aside as no longer useful and made the Tory government uphold the two things now to his interest to conserve, — the *status quo* and the power of the Crown.

No one has ever doubted the power of fascination exercised by George, which was due not less to his clever adaptability, than to his high position. What reader of Lockhart's "Life of Scott" can forget the dinner party when the King and Sir Walter exchanged mutual badinage in the freest manner? We find the same in Creevey regarding the extreme affability with which he treated him and the Whig leaders at Brighton, when Prince Regent. George's charm of manner and the ease with which he could adapt himself to his company and forget to all appearance his royal dignity in social intercourse was one of his most powerful political assets which he used to the fullest advantage.

The influence exercised by him was almost wholly evil. Head of the state in the days of its greatest military glory, when the moral and political influence of England was paramount in Europe; living in the days of great industrial and mechanical triumph, in which his country had the fullest share; confronted as King with some of the gravest social problems, which its poets and philosophers were taxing their utmost to expose and remove, — the marvel is that any man could have occupied such a position, and yet interested himself almost exclusively in frivolous pleasures and sensual amours.

I do not think that it is too harsh a verdict to say that George IV's example acted like a poison to the social life of several generations. Vice was rampant enough in English society before he came to manhood; but his father had done much to set an example to his nobility of a pure domestic life, and to encourage simple tastes and pleasures.

Gambling and profligacy went on despite the King; but his son led the orgies of extravagance. His taste was atrocious. What can be more monstrous than the Pavilion at Brighton? Read Thackeray's description of his coming of age fête at Carlton House, quoted from the *European Magazine*, 1784: "The saloon may be styled the *chef-d'œuvre*, and in every ornament discovers great invention. It is hung with a figured plush. . . . The window curtains, sofas, and chairs are of the same colour. The ceiling is ornamented with emblematical paintings, representing the Graces and Muses, together with Jupiter, Mercury, and Apollo and Paris. Two ormolu chandeliers are placed here, etc., etc." [1] The coronation was a monstrous exhibition of extravagance. For the feast in Westminster Hall, where the Champion of England, "mounted on a horse, borrowed from Astley's theatre, rode into the

[1] Quoted from Thackeray's "Four Georges."

Hall," more than eight hundred dozen of wine and one hundred gallons of punch were provided. Vulgarity distinguished the period of the 'First Gentleman in Europe.' Countless families were brought to ruin by association with him, and at no time that I can call did more eminent people die by their own hands. As Thackeray says: "There is no greater satire on that proud society . . . than that it admired George!"

One episode which perhaps throws as much light as anything upon the manners and morals of the time is the trial of Caroline of Brunswick, the unhappy, if indiscreet, consort of George IV. Before making the attempt I am afraid I must go back to 1795, when the Prince of Wales, on the report of his not too refined sailor brother, decided to offer his hand to that princess. He got very well paid by the country for the sacrifice. His income was raised from £60,000 ($300,000) to £125,000 ($625,000); for the

preparations for the wedding he got £27,000 ($135,000); a further grant of jewels and plate, or cash to buy them, £28,000 ($140,000). Then came £15,000 ($~~150,000~~) to complete Carlton House; and the Princess, his wife, was in addition offered an allowance of £50,000 ($250,000) a year. For some reason — I should say she was the only princess who ever did so — Caroline accepted less than was offered as income; namely, £35,000 ($175,000).

It is true George also wanted his debts, amounting to a trifle of £600,000 ($3,000,000) odd, paid, and failed to get it; still, considering the value of money in those days, and that times in England were worse than had been known, — wars, taxes, bad seasons, the poor in abject distress, Pitt distracted how to raise money, sedition rampant, and no very glorious period for the British arms, — he certainly did not sell himself cheap. Of the miserable marriage which ensued little need

be said. From the time the Prince raised his bride, when she tried to kneel, and said to Lord Malmesbury, "Harris, I am not well; get me a glass of brandy," to her death twenty-six years later, it is one long discreditable story. But I allude to it for a personal reason. I have myself seen two of the counsels of the Queen in the celebrated trial. Dr. Lushington was a friend of my family's, and I was at a school in Brighton which Lord Brougham used to visit; and — I believe I am correct in saying this — I actually received one of the prizes when he gave them away. I certainly have a book on my shelves which, I fancy, I got on that occasion. It assuredly does not make a man feel young when he realises that he has seen and can remember men who not only witnessed but took a very prominent part in a trial which was held ninety-six years ago.

Let me, however, recapitulate the events which led up to the great scene in the House

of Lords. George as Prince of Wales hated his wife from the first, and after the birth of the Princess Charlotte refused to have anything to do with her. On April 30, 1796, the Prince wrote a letter to the Princess in which he said: "Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other, because nature has not made us suitable to each other. . . . I shall now finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that, as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity."

To do George justice, his wife does not seem to have been attractive. He had excellent taste in dress and deportment; and Caroline was far from being a model of refinement in appearance or manners, whilst her choice of company was never discreet. The old King always treated her with kindness and even affection, but he found it necessary

to warn her to be more careful in the selection of her society. In 1804 the Prince of Wales instituted a "Delicate Enquiry," which four Lords were appointed to conduct, with the result that the behaviour of the Princess was pronounced not *un*satisfactory. In the years which followed there were constant quarrels and recriminations about the education of their daughter, the Princess Charlotte of Wales, a high-spirited girl who stood up boldly to the ill treatment she received at her father's hands, and defended her mother. In 1814 the Princess of Wales left England for her famous travels. Two years later the Princess Charlotte married Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and settled down at Claremont, a beautiful place purchased for her by the nation. The young couple were thoroughly happy, the people looked forward to being one day ruled over by a beloved and virtuous queen. The incredible scandals of the family of George III were

being forgotten, when the news came that the Princess was dead.

I shall *never* get to the trial! I must digress once more. What ensued was almost farcical. Despite the fact that George III had an immense family, he had no grandchildren. All his elderly sons hastened to get married. The Prince Regent was very little married to his wife, and very much so to various other ladies; the Duke of York had married happily, and was, if not always faithful, a kindly husband; but he had no family. The Duke of Cumberland had married a princess of whom the royal family disapproved, and perhaps he was more hated by the nation than any member of the house of Hanover. Among other things, many firmly believed that he was really guilty of the murder of his servant, Sellis. The idea of his coming to the throne was dreaded on all sides. But there was no lack of *nominally* unmarried Royal Dukes, — Clarence, Sussex,

Kent, and Cambridge. The nearest persons to the succession, who had families, were the King of Würtemburg, his brother, and their sister the Princess Frederica Buonaparte. It became necessary for the Royal Dukes to take wives in accordance with the Royal Marriage Act of 1772;[1] and, though they had not only themselves but other ladies and their children to consider, these noble princes presented themselves at the altar of Hymen. Not, however, without some forethought, as the following remarks of the Duke of Kent to his friend Mr. Creevey testify:

The Duke thought that his brother Clarence would marry, but that his price would be too high for the ministers to accept, viz., "a settlement such as is proper for a prince who marries expressly for a succession to the Throne," and in addition the payment of

[1] Which made illegal any marriage contracted by a prince of the blood without the consent of King and Parliament.

all his debts, and a handsome provision for each of his ten natural children. Kent, being next in the succession, was ready to do it cheaper. "It is now twenty-seven years that Madame St. Laurent and I have lived together, . . . and you may well imagine, Mr. Creevey, the pang it will occasion me to part with her." She need not have very much; but a certain number of servants and a carriage are essentials. Being a "man of no ambition," the Duke of Kent wanted only £25,000 ($100,000) a year in addition to his present income if he took a wife — the same sum as York had when he married in 1792, — and Kent was generously prepared to make no further demands because of the decreased value of money since his brother's allowance was made. "As to the payment of my debts," he concluded, "I don't call them great. The nation, on the contrary, is greatly my debtor." So it is; for he married, and became the father of Queen Victoria.

The Princess Caroline had left England in 1814 and had been touring in the Mediterranean ever since. At first she was attended by some English in her suite; but these gradually dropped off, leaving Her Royal Highness without any of her husband's subjects about her. We need not follow her in her travels or adventures. It is enough to say that she visited very out-of-the-way places and mixed with the sort of people no ordinary lady, not to say a royal Princess, could be expected to meet. She loaded her courier, Bergami, with honours and favours, she founded an order of knighthood when she visited Jerusalem and made him Grand Master. She had procured for him the title of Baron. Her conduct and the familiarities she permitted were, to say the least, indiscreet. Undoubtedly she had laid herself open to a serious charge of misconduct.

The Prince Regent resolved to do his best

to get rid of his hated wife by trying to obtain a divorce. But not only law but also public opinion was against this. He had driven his wife away with every possible insult, he had kept her apart from her daughter, the Queen, his mother, had refused to receive her as Princess of Wales at court. And if, in desperation, Caroline had failed in her duty, Europe rang with stories of the immorality of the Regent, and the common people were heart and soul on the side of his wife. As a divorce seemed hopeless, attempts were made to bribe Caroline to renounce her titles and live on a large income out of England. Matters came to a climax when George III died. If George IV was King, his wife was Queen of England; and she was resolved to return to the country and maintain her rights.

This miserable matrimonial squabble with all its sordid details rapidly assumed the dimensions of a political struggle which rent

the country in twain. The Whigs had never forgiven George for using them as long as he was Prince of Wales and throwing them over when he became Regent in 1812. They therefore espoused the cause of the Queen; and as far as possible — for they had little admiration of her conduct — defended her. The Whig lawyers rallied to her cause, notably Henry Brougham, who, despite his great talents, had suffered from the exclusiveness of the great Whig families. As a parvenu, high political office was closed to Brougham, but the case of the Queen gave him an unrivalled chance as a lawyer. More honest and unselfish and almost as useful to Queen Caroline was Alderman Wood, a prominent citizen of London, who more than once filled the office of Lord Mayor. Despised by the polite society of the time, called by the King, with his usual delicacy, "that beast Wood," the alderman understood better than anyone the effect of the

Queen's return to the country. He knew that, however great her indiscretions, her wrongs would win her popular sympathy, and that her courage in facing her accusers would be sure to range the nation on her side. That he was no vulgar demagogue is attested by the facts that the royal family often sought his counsel; that it is due to his advice that Queen Victoria was born in England; and that he was the first baronet she created shortly after her accession to the throne. But of all the Queen's friends there is no one who was more honest and faithful than that gaunt Scotch spinster, the Lady Ann Hamilton, whose memoirs were published when she was very old, without her consent and greatly to her distress. The daughter of the Duke of Hamilton and sister to the radical Lord Archibald Hamilton, she was six foot high, awkward and ungainly, and an object of ridicule to Caroline and her friends. They called her Joan of

Arc, and shewed her no consideration and little courtesy. Yet in her hours of trial Caroline had no truer or stauncher friend. Her "Secret History of the Court of England," published under the circumstances to which I have alluded, is extraordinarily scurrilous, but it reflects the fierceness of party spirit which animated the Whig faction; and I may have to recur to it.

George III died on January 29, 1820. The first act of his successor was to refuse to allow the new Queen's name to appear in the prayer for the Royal family. But on the 7th of June Her Majesty entered London. The road from Westminster Bridge to Greenwich was thronged with spectators. "She travelled," says Grenville, "in an open landau, Alderman Wood by her side and Lady Ann Hamilton and another woman opposite. Everybody was disgusted at the vulgarity of Wood sitting in the place of honour, whilst the Duke of Hamilton's sister was

sitting backwards in the carriage." . . . "It is impossible," he adds, "to conceive the sensation created by this event. Nobody either blames or approves of this sudden return, but all ask, What will be done next? How is it to end?"

Events moved rapidly. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, produced the famous green bag, full of incriminating documents, in the House of Lords, but the Queen did not flinch. It was even proposed to bring her to trial under the fourteenth century act of treasons, 23 Edw. III.

Finally, however, the King's advisers determined, not to try the Queen, but to introduce a bill into the House of Lords depriving her of all royal titles and dignities and divorcing her from her husband. But in order to carry the bill an investigation into her conduct was necessary, so that she was practically, if not actually, tried.

I propose to ask you to follow the Queen's

case in Creevey's notes, and I think we shall gather from them something of the interest with which people watched it.

The trial began on Aug. 17; and Creevey thus describes the entry of the Queen. "To describe to you her appearance and manner is far beyond my powers. I had been taught to believe she was as much improved in looks as in dignity of manners; it is therefore with much pain I am obliged to observe that the nearest resemblance I can recollect to this much injured lady is a toy which you used to call Fanny Royde. There is another toy of a rabbit or a cat, whose tail you squeeze under its body, and then out it jumps in half a minute off the ground into the air. The first of these toys you must suppose to represent the person of the Queen; the latter the manner by which she popped all at once into the House, made a *duck* at the throne, another to the Peers, and a concluding jump into the chair which was placed for her.

Lady Ann Hamilton was behind the Queen, leaning on her brother Archy's arm. . . . She is full six feet high and bears a striking resemblance to one of Lord Derby's great deer."

Brougham and Denman both spoke for the Queen, and she was better received on the next day, the 18th. Creevey went off to his club and wrote: "Nothing can be more triumphant for the Queen than this day altogether. . . . The Law Officers of the Crown are damnably overweighted by Brougham and Denman." The next day the facts adduced by the Attorney General made things look bad. A less numerous and reputable crowd appeared to cheer the Queen on the 22d. "Now," writes Creevey, "her danger begins." But then things began to mend; the witness in whom the prosecution had most confidence was a certain Teodoro Majocchi. Brougham forced him to contradict himself, and seeing how he was being driven into ad-

missions, the witness continually replied, *Non mi ricordo*, "I don't remember," a phrase which became for a time proverbial. There were very few English witnesses, but when Creevey, on Aug. 25, mentioned this to the Duke of Wellington, his Grace replied, "Ho! but we have a great many English witnesses — officers." "And this was the thing," writes Creevey, "which frightened me most." On the 26th the evidence of a chambermaid gave trouble, and Creevey is angry with the Queen. "This," to quote him, "gives considerable — indeed very great advantage — to the case of that eternal fool, to call her (the Queen) no worse name." A few days later, Sept. 8, he calls her "the idiot." — The next day the House adjourned till the 3d October, and the divorce clause was dropped. Creevey remarks that now the Bill of Pains and Penalties was really directed against the King: its object being "to declare the Queen an abandoned woman, and the King

a fit associate for her!" When the House sat on Oct. 3, Mr. Brougham made his great speech for the defence. On the 6th it came out that the husband of the Queen's friend, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, had sold his wife's letters to the Treasury. On the 9th Creevey reports "the town literally drunk with joy at the unparalleled triumph of the Queen." But at 4 P.M. the weather changed. Two Naval officers, Flynn and Hownam, were called for the defence, and broke down under cross examination, so that the Queen's guilt became almost certain. Then the government lost its advantage by committing the mistake of letting a witness, who was to have been indicted for perjury, leave the country. On the 13th the Duke of Norfolk wrote to Creevey, saying that "if this horrible bill" passed, he would feel no regret that as a Roman Catholic he could not take his seat as a Peer. At last, on Oct. 24, the trial was nearing its end and Denman began to sum

up. The attack he made on the King and the Duke of Clarence, who had been especially bitter against the Queen, is a striking example of the freedom allowed to a British advocate. He compared the case to the dismissal of the virtuous Octavia by Nero and the examination of her servants by his infamous minister, Tigellinus.

He looked at the Duke of Clarence and declared that he ought to come forward as a witness and not whisper slanders against Caroline. The Queen, he said, might well exclaim, "Come forth, thou slanderer, and let me see thy face! If thou would'st equal the respectability of an Italian witness, come forth and depose in open court. As thou art, thou art worse than an Italian assassin! Because, while I am boldly and manfully meeting my accusers, thou art plunging a dagger unseen into my bosom."

In his peroration Denman made a most unlucky slip, but he faithfully reproduced

the irrational attitude of public opinion.[1] The people believed the Queen guilty and yet desired her acquittal. She had suffered so cruelly, she had been so shamefully treated, her ruin had been sought by employing spies against her, her accusers were worse than she. So Denman quoted the divine words to less guilty accusers of a sinful woman — "Go and sin no more," — whereupon a wag wrote:

> "Most gracious Queen, we thee implore
> To go away and sin no more;
> But if that effort be too great,
> To go away, at any rate."

Then followed the debate, and on the 6th of November, even with the aid of eleven of the bishops, there was a majority of only 28 in favour of the Bill of Pains and Penalties. The feeling of the peers was in accordance with Denman's peroration. Caroline was guilty

[1] I am informed by a friend, Mr. Denman, a grandson of Caroline's Counsel, that the words were not used in the speech, which was reported wrongly in the *Annual Register*.

but ought not to be punished. Said Lord Ellenborough: "No man who had heard the evidence would say that the Queen of England was not the last woman in the country which a man of honour would wish his wife to resemble, or the father of a family would recommend as an example to his daughters." (*Loud cheers.*) But he voted against the bill. On Nov. 8 it was proposed that the divorce clause should be tacked on to the bill. Creevey writes (Nov. 10): "*Three times three!* if you please, before you read a word further. — The Bill has gone, thank God! to the devil. Their majority was brought down to 9 . . . and then the dolorous Liverpool came forward and *struck*. He moved that his own bill be read this day six months." "I was a bad boy," he writes next morning, "and drank an extra bottle of claret with Foley, Dundas, etc." I need not tell the rest of poor Caroline's story, how public feeling calmed down, especially when Parlia-

ment voted her £50,000 ($250,000) a year. How she tried to attend the Coronation, how she died, and the King ordered the body not to be taken through London, and how the people rose and forced the funeral procession to pass through the city, how at last she found rest among her ancestors in her native Brunswick. Time will not permit me to do more than allude to George's visit to Ireland at the very time his injured wife was dying, and his speech: "This is one of the happiest days of my life. I have long wished to visit you. My heart has always been Irish. Go and do by me as I shall do by you. Go and drink my health in a bumper. I shall drink all yours in a bumper of Irish whiskey."

Well might Byron celebrate the occasion of the Irish visit and the King's tumultuous welcome:

"Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God — as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow —

Such servile devotion might shame him away.
Ay, roar in his train! Let their orators lash
Their fanciful spirit to pamper his pride."

I am afraid I have occupied much time with this famous trial. Had I told you the evidence in the least detail I should only have inspired disgust. Nor should I have selected the subject except for a special reason.

Though no results immediately followed, even though George IV recovered his popularity in a measure, — for he was a very clever and could be a very charming man, — yet the very fact that the bill was introduced into the House of Lords ranged public opinion against that branch of the Legislature as nothing previously seemed to have done. It brought about the time when the days of the aristocracy as the sole influence in government were to be numbered. Peers were no longer to be allowed the enormous privileges they had enjoyed. They had ranged

themselves on the side of the throne in an unjust cause, — not because they cared for the King, — but because they considered their interests and his to be identical. The Reform Bill of 1832 was the answer of the English middle class to the Bill of Pains and Penalties of 1820.

LECTURE VI

Social Abuses as Exposed by Charles Dickens

Let us revel in the company of a writer who has been perhaps even more appreciated in America than in his own country: and will you allow me to express my opinion that the greatest proof of the magnanimity of your fathers was shown in the fact that they forgave "Martin Chuzzlewit," and took its author to their heart? No little man, and for that matter little nation, can bear to be caricatured. Many even who possess true greatness cannot endure ridicule. It must remain to the eternal credit of your country that Charles Dickens was beloved by it. Nowhere did the creator of "our Elijah Pogram," Hannibal Chollop, Mrs. Hominy, and

Mr. Scadder find a warmer welcome than in the country where he discovered their prototypes; and his popularity in America is a testimony to the good humour and generosity of its people.

My object in this lecture is to endeavour to explain the England which Dickens described; and I will with your permission preface my remarks by pointing out some of the disadvantages of an old society, bearing in mind its advantages also. The England in which Dickens worked was in many respects simpler in life, yet more fertile in types of character, than it is at present. I cannot but think that people got more pleasure out of living than they do in our days. Yet if I may venture upon a paradox, the world of "Pickwick" was older, and not younger, than the one in which we are living.

Strictly speaking, modern England is not an "*old*" country, but a new one. Steam and electricity, the progress of science and the

advance of democratic ideas have inaugurated a new age; and we, as well as you in America, live in days of experiment rather than of tradition. But the England of the thirties was an old country. It was changing rapidly, it is true; yet it is scarce an exaggeration to say that it bore a greater resemblance to the England of Queen Elizabeth than to that of the present day; but the institutions of the past, which had changed very little in character, had become more intolerable as civilisation advanced; and, consecrated by time, they pressed very heavily on the many to the great benefit of the few interested in their maintenance.

The main thesis I shall put before you today is that it is time that an edition of Dickens appeared with a good popular commentary; for much of it is not intelligible even to an English reader at the present day: and one thing which the volumes should have is a map of the London which he is so fond of

describing. Most of the sites have become so changed as to be hardly recognisable; and the appearance of the streets is so altered that one can hardly reconstruct them even in imagination. It would be no difficult task to find plans and pictures to assist one in this direction, and the result would, I think, be most illuminating to the reader. The prisons, for example, of which we read so much, the Fleet, the Marshalsea, Newgate itself, have all disappeared, and few now know even where the two former actually stood. As to the notes and comments which might be written, I hope this lecture may indicate what I mean.

The first novel I shall take is "Oliver Twist" because it — despite the charm of the story — is almost unintelligible to the ordinary reader, where it deals with the conditions of the lives of the very poor and of the criminal classes. I need hardly remind you of the details. There is the poor little boy born

and bred in the workhouse under Mr. Bumble the beadle, his being apprenticed, his escape to London, and his introduction to the thieves' school kept by the Jew Fagin, the devilish plot to make him a criminal, his escape, and his restoration to his family. A character like Fagin's would be impossible in London at the present day. There may be equally dangerous criminals; but he was protected by a system which is now happily entirely obsolete. His infamous trade was to train up criminals whom he finally handed over to the arm of the law.

"I say," said the other (the landlord of the Cripple), "what a time this would be for a sell. I've got Phil Barker here: so drunk that a boy might take him." "Aha! but it's not Phil Barker's time," said the Jew, looking up. "Phil has something more to do, before we can afford to part with him, so go back to the company, my dear, and tell

them to lead merry lives — *while they last*, ha! ha! ha!"

And again:

"Change it," exclaimed the Jew (to Nancy). . . . "I will change it! Listen to me, you drab. Listen to me, who with six words can strangle Sykes, as surely as if I had his bull's throat between my fingers now. If he comes back and leaves that boy behind him, — if he gets off free, and dead or alive fails to restore him to me — murder him yourself if you would have him escape Jack Ketch: and do it the moment he sets foot in this room, or mind me, it will be too late!"

These were no empty boasts. Fagin had literally the lives of all who thieved for him in his pocket, and this is the motive of the plot of the story. The object of Fagin is to get Oliver Twist to commit some crime and thus be able to hand him over to the

police as soon as it was convenient to do so. Let us see how this could be managed. There were practically no police. London was protected by a horse patrol in the suburbs and a small foot patrol in the streets. Each parish had its own watchman, who might not under any circumstances leave his beat, not even to prevent a felony. The parish constable or headborough was paid a ridiculous wage: in the great parish of Shoreditch he received £4.10.0 ($22.50) a year. Yet it was, what with blackmail and fees, a lucrative office. If the headborough prosecuted, he could get expenses at the rate of $6 a day and more, and he could bring in any other friend who held the same office as a witness — expenses paid.

Crime was prevented by encouraging informers. A man could get £40 ($200) for information which led to a capital conviction, and he could sell the exemption which he also gained from serving in a public office

in the parish for a similar sum. It became actually in the interest of the thief takers to allow young persons and even children to commit minor crimes in the hope that sooner or later they would be guilty of worse offences. It was naturally the prime object of the informer to obtain a conviction. Fagin combined the work of a receiver of stolen goods with that of a thief taker.

The administration of the workhouse system was equally bad. The humour with which Dickens describes Mr. Bumble the beadle, his pomposity, his courtship of the matron, and his fall, is delightful; but Mr. Bumble, the visiting magistrates, and the overseers of the poor represented a state of things almost unthinkable in its brutality. Oliver himself was nearly being apprenticed to a sweep who would certainly have treated him much as Crabbe's "Peter Grimes" treated his apprentice, and this dialogue between Mr. Bumble and Mrs. Mann, the nurse of

the pauper children, reveals the spirit with which the indigent poor were treated.

"Mrs. Mann, I am going to London."

"Lawk, Mr. Bumble," said Mrs. Mann, starting back.

"To London, ma'am," resumed the inflexible beadle, "by coach. I and two paupers, Mrs. Mann! A legal action is a-coming on, and the board has appointed me — me, Mrs. Mann — to depose to the matter at Clerkenwell. . . ."

"You are going by coach, Sir? I thought it was always usual to send them paupers in carts."

"That's when they're ill, Mrs. Mann," said the beadle. "We put sick paupers in carts in rainy weather, to prevent their taking cold."

"Oh," said Mrs. Mann.

"The opposition coach contracts for these two; and takes them cheap," said Mr.

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Bumble. "They are both in a very low state, and we find it would come two pounds cheaper to move 'em than to bury them — that is, if we can throw 'em upon another parish, which I think we shall be able to do, if they don't die upon the road to spite us. Ha! Ha! Ha!" When Mr. Bumble had laughed a little his eyes again encountered the cocked hat; and he became grave.[1]

Here is fiction: let us turn to facts as we find them in a history of the England of the period:

The parish had the right to apprentice the children of poor parents to any trade. . . . Children under this law might be sent to any part of the Kingdom. "It is a

[1] The question of the domicile or "settlement" of paupers was the cause of endless litigation. See Mr. Blake Odgers' lecture V in "A Century of Law Reform." He quotes a judgment in 1724 which has been preserved in rhyme.

"A woman, having a 'settlement,' married a man with none.
The question was, he being dead, if what she had is gone.
Quoth Sir John Pratt, the 'settlement' suspended did remain,
Living the husband; but, him dead, it doth revive again."

very common practice," wrote Romilly in 1811, "with the great populous parishes in London to bind children in large numbers to the proprietors of cotton mills . . . at a distance of 200 miles. . . . The children, who are sent off by waggon loads at a time, are as much lost for ever to their parents as if they were shipped off for the West Indies. The parishes that bind them get rid of them for ever, and the poor children have not a human being in the world to whom they can look up for redress . . . from these wholesale dealers whose object it is to get everything that they can wring from their excessive labours and fatigue. . . . Instances (and not very few) have occurred in our criminal tribunals of wretches who have murdered their parish apprentices that they might get fresh premiums with new apprentices." Some manufacturers, it is shocking to state, agreed to take one idiot for every nineteen sane children.

Even naturally humane men were found to defend these dreadful abuses in the House of Commons. Here is an extract from a speech: "Although in the higher ranks of society it was true that to cultivate the affections of children for their family was the source of every virtue, yet it was not so among the lower orders. . . . It would be highly injurious to the public to put a stop to the binding of so many apprentices to the cotton manufacturers, as it must necessarily raise the price of labour and enhance the price of cotton manufactured goods!"

We turn next to the debtor's prison which is so prominent in the "Pickwick Papers." So resolute was Mr. Pickwick not to submit to the judgment against him in the famous trial that he allowed himself to be imprisoned in the Fleet. He was first put into the Warden's room with several other prisoners. When he entered the room, the others were absent. "So he sat down on the foot of his

little iron bedstead, and began to wonder how much a year the warden made out of the dirty room. Having satisfied himself, by mathematical calculation, that the apartment was about equal in annual value to a freehold in a small street in the suburbs of London," etc., etc.

Here we have one of the great abuses of the horrible "debtor's prisons" in London. They were jobbed by the officials, and the bare decencies of life could only be obtained by a heavy payment. The warders charged £1.1.0. on entrance for "garnish," which was supposed to provide coals, candles, brooms, etc., and exorbitant fees were demanded for rooms. The state of those who could not pay was deplorable. In the prison of the Court of Requests at Birmingham, according to the Parliamentary papers of 1844, eight years after "Pickwick" was written, the male prisoners slept in an attic eleven feet long by sixteen broad on platforms littered with

loose straw. For exercise, at Kidderminster they walked in a yard thirteen yards square; and their room was without even a fireplace. For food they were allowed one quarter of a loaf of bread and were allowed two jugfuls of water for drinking and washing.

In 1827 nearly 6000 persons in London were imprisoned for debt. We read constantly in Dickens of Chancery prisoners, especially in "Little Dorrit"; men who had been thrown into gaol to rot there for years because they could not pay for suits in which they had been quite unwillingly involved. The absurdity of the system was enhanced by the fact that they were deprived of any chance of working to pay their debts. Many were forgotten and left literally to rot. They were not even allowed to escape by bankruptcy; for unless a man failed in trade he could not claim that relief, nor could his property be divided among his creditors. The law thus gave no means of

escape to the debtor nor of payment to the creditor.

Imprisonment for debt was not abolished in England till 1869; and it is now only allowed by order of the court in the case of small debts which people can but will not pay.

The horrors of the prisons which Howard and Elizabeth Fry, for all their gallant efforts, were powerless to remove, gave rise to a wave of public sentiment which carried their administration to an opposite extreme. Dickens saw this and exposed the folly of the movement in "David Copperfield." You will doubtless remember that David's old schoolmaster, Mr. Creakle, of Salem House, suddenly developed from a brutal pedagogue into an ardent philanthropist, after having become a Middlesex magistrate, and devoted himself to the well-being of criminals. Copperfield, as the rising author of the day (Dickens himself), is invited to see a new model prison and takes his old friend Traddles with him.

"It was an immense and solid building, erected at a vast expense. I could not help thinking, as we approached the gate, what an uproar would have been made in the country, if any deluded man had proposed to spend one half the money on the erection of an industrial school for the young or a house of refuge for the deserving old. In the kitchen repasts were being prepared for the prisoners, so delicate that none of our soldiers, sailors, labourers, or workmen could hope ever to dine half so well."

There, in a most comfortable cell, our friends find Uriah Heep reading a hymn book, canting and complaining of the toughness of the beef; and Mr. Littimer, Steerforth's infamous valet, gently hinting that the milk supplied might have been adulterated. To illustrate this I turned to the old numbers of *Punch* of the day, a study of which, comic paper though it be, is one of the best illustrations of the current life and

thought of every period since it appeared in 1839. There one finds innumerable jokes and pictures of convicts enjoying every sort of luxury, obsequiously waited on by the warders. Prison reform had to be irrational before it could become sane; for, as David Copperfield says, "Perhaps it is a good thing to have an unsound hobby ridden hard; for it's the sooner ridden to death."

Next we come to an abuse, on which I must speak with much diffidence, for no one but a trained lawyer could properly discuss it — the Court of Chancery. It is the theme of much of Dickens' best work and is the whole motive of "Bleak House" and the famous Jarndyce and Jarndyce lawsuit. The mixture of humour and pathos in the treatment of this subject tempts me to digress a little before explaining as best I may the actual state of the law at the time. We are introduced to those who were interested in the vast machinery of the Court of Chancery,

as the great Jarndyce case drags its slow length along from the Lord Chancellor down to the starving law writer. We see suitors of every description like the "man from Shropshire" and "Miss Flyte." We seem to smell the musty law papers as we read the book. I confess to feeling almost maddened by the callous slowness with which Mr. Vholes the solicitor, who "maintained an aged father in the Vale of Taunton," played with the hopes and fears of the anxious suitors. The eminent respectability of such a practitioner, adds Dickens, was always quoted whenever a commission sat to see whether the business of the Court could be expedited. We laugh, but the tears are not far off, at the humour of such people as Miss Flyte, Mr. Gruppy, Conversation Kenge; yet we feel the pathos of all the woe and disappointment caused by the delays of the monstrous machine of the Law.

To Dickens the Court of Chancery repre-

sented two things: first it stood for oppression. It appeared to him a vast system backed by vested interests, which sucked unhappy suitors into litigation against their will, fettered and crippled them for the rest of their lives, and, in many cases, ultimately consigned them to the despairing misery of a debtor's prison.

It drove men and women to madness, like poor Miss Flyte, or made them misanthropes, like Mr. Grindley, "the man from Shropshire." It made wretched, half-ruined people hang about the courts day after day expecting a judgment, it caused houses to fall into ruin, and whole streets to become deserted because Chancery could not decide to whom they belonged. Listen to "the man from Shropshire's" description of his own case:

"Mr. Jarndyce, consider my case. As there is a heaven above us, this is my case. I am one of two brothers. My father (a

farmer) made a will and left his farm and stock to my mother for her life. After my mother's death, all was to come to me, except a legacy of £300 that I was to pay to my brother."

The brother claimed the legacy, Grindley said he had had some of it, and the brother filed a bill in Chancery.

"Seventeen persons were made defendants in this simple suit." Two years elapsed and the Master in Chancery then found there ought to be another defendant, and all the proceedings were quashed. "The costs at that time — before the suit had begun, were three times the legacy."

The brother tried to back out, but the court would not let him. The whole property was sucked away in a suit which common sense could have decided in a day.

The demoralising effect of a court so dilatory and so capricious also revealed itself in its influence on character. Men and women

spent their lives in waiting for a decision and found it impossible to settle to any regular calling.

The court was, in fact, like a gigantic lottery. A favourable decision might make a man wealthy in a day, and with such a prospect it was impossible for him to settle down to the drudgery of a profession. In addition to this, so conflicting were the interests involved that families were divided hopelessly.

How pathetically does Dickens sketch the character of Richard Carstone! He tries physic, the army, the law, and cannot stick to any as his vocation. He feels that at any time the Jarndyce case may make him a rich man. His only hope is to drive it to a conclusion. Under the influence of Mr. Vholes he learns to distrust his old friend Mr. John Jarndyce, and even, in part, his betrothed, the sweet Ada, because they too have interests in the suit. When the case comes to an end by all the money being

absorbed in costs, he dies, despairing yet penitent.

Let us now see how the bare facts, stripped of romance, appear.

The Court of Chancery represents Equity, which is, ideally, law in its highest aspect, regarded not as interpreted by statute or custom but from the standpoint of justice tempered by mercy. As such Equity came to be regarded as more important than Common law; and the Chancery overshadowed the other courts. The Chancellor rose constantly in importance, and as the chief of the King's chaplains and his adviser in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy he became "the keeper of the King's conscience." As time went on, Equity like Common law was based on precedent, and its original purpose fell into the background. The business of the Chancery was continually on the increase, and it finally became utterly unmanageable. Protracted law suits are cer-

tainly no new thing and in the 15th century there are, I believe, examples of interminable litigation. At an early date, the "law's delay" had passed into a proverb; and nothing was done to remedy the growing evil. The Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls were the only available judges; and as population increased and conditions of life became more complicated, the grievances of the wretched suitors in Chancery became intolerable. As you know, in the prize ring, when a boxer had got his adversary into a hopeless position and could treat him as he liked, the beaten man was said to be "in chancery."

It is generally supposed that the Chancellor in "Bleak House" is the famous Lord Eldon, whose tenure of that exalted office is almost the longest on record. He was a man of many virtues and singularly kind-hearted, — the description of his reception of the wards in Chancery in the book before

us does ample justice to this trait — and as a lawyer he ranks among the very foremost exponents of the law of England. But he knew and valued the merits of the legal system; and despite the fact of many cases of individual hardship, these were many, and he was so anxious to give judgments in exact accordance with the law that he had great difficulty in making up his mind. As a matter of fact a judgment by Lord Eldon is even now accepted in your country as well as mine: but his conscientious thoroughness was a great drawback in delaying the congested business of the court. I will now give some formal examples of the condition of the Chancery, taken from Spencer Walpole's "History of England from A.D. 1816."

But first let me quote Dean Swift's description of the law's delay a century earlier. It is of course a caricature: but his satire is so pungent and his wit so satirical that I cannot resist the temptation of using his famous book.

Swift makes Gulliver explain the law of England to the Houyhnhnms, the horses who rule over the human Yahoos.

"It is a maxim among these lawyers that whatever hath been done may be legally done again; and therefore they take special care to record all the decisions made against common justice and the general reason of mankind. These, under the name of precedents, they produce as authorities, to justify the most iniquitous opinions, and the judges never fail of directing accordingly.

"In pleading they studiously avoid entering into the merits of a case; but are loud, violent, and tedious, in dwelling on all circumstances which are not to the purpose. For instance, in the case already mentioned (a claim to a cow) they never desire to know what claim or title my adversary hath to my cow; but whether the said cow were red or black; her horns long or short; whether the field I graze her in be round or square;

whether she was milked at home or abroad; what diseases she is subject to and the like; after which they consult precedents, adjourn the cause from time to time, and in ten, twenty, or thirty years come to an issue."

Here is a typical undefended Chancery suit. A will which came into force in 1819 contained bequests to charities. These legacies were contrary to the Mortmain laws, and were consequently void. The heir-at-law filed a bill in Chancery to make them so. During 1820 the trustees of the charities put in their answers. In 1821 the case was referred to the Master in Chancery to find out who was the heir at law. By 1823 he was ready with an answer, and the court directed him to give an account of the property. He did so in 1824. In 1825 the case was set down for further directions; in 1826 the Master was told to ascertain the children of the testator's half-nephews. This

took till 1828, when the case was reported to the House of Commons. The Master was then still pursuing his enquiries. A defended case was naturally slower. The case was referred to the Master in Chancery; he reported: exceptions were then taken to his report, and so on. In about ten years something probably occurred to make it necessary to begin again. The Masters were paid by fees and were interested in making a case last. Their incomes often amounted to as much as from £3000 ($15,000) to £4000 ($20,000) a year. The amount of law copying was prodigious. In one case it came to 10,497 folios, for which a charge of six shillings and eight pence ($1.60) for each folio was made. You recollect the poor captain who sunk to the position of a law-copying clerk. Be sure he was not paid at this rate.

Such then were a few of the abuses of one branch of the legal system which Dickens

exposed. They have in the main been disposed of since 1873. We cannot, however, leave the subject without a few words on his inexhaustible fertility in drawing the characters of lawyers.

The profession is represented throughout. We see Mr. Justice Stareleigh trying Mr. Pickwick and waking up at intervals. Who can forget the cross-examination of Sam Weller.

"'Is it a good place?'" Sam is asked. Yes, Sir. "Little to do and plenty to get,' said Sergeant Buzfuz jocularly. 'Plenty to get, as the soldier said when they gave him six dozen,' replied Sam. 'You mustn't tell us what the soldier or anybody else said,' remarked the judge, waking up suddenly. 'It is not evidence.'" Immortal too are the counsel in that famous case, the eloquent Buzfuz and the abstracted Stubbin; nor can we forget the unlucky novice, Mr. Phunky, who ruined the case for Mr. Pick-

wick by the way he cross-examined Mr. Winkle.

No profession has risen more in dignity and respectability in England in recent years than that of the solicitor or attorney. In Scott and in almost all earlier novelists, the man who prepared the work for counsel and was engaged in the humbler practice of the courts is nearly always represented as a rogue. How often do we find him described as a "miserable pettifogger" and charged with "sharp practice." It is the same with Dickens. Even Mr. Perker in "Pickwick," who is thoroughly honest, cannot withhold his admiration of Dodson and Fogg's acuteness.

"'Dodson and Fogg have taken Mrs. Bardell in execution for her costs, Sir,' said Job.

'No,' exclaimed Perker, putting his hands in his pockets, and reclining against the sideboard.

'Yes,' said Job. 'It seems they got a

cognovit out of her, for the amount of 'em, directly after the trial.'

'By Jove!' said Perker, taking both hands out of his pockets, and striking the knuckles of his right against the palm of his left, emphatically, 'those are the cleverest scamps I ever had anything to do with.'

'The sharpest practitioners *I* ever knew, Sir,' observed Lowten.

'Sharp,' echoed Perker. 'There's no knowing where to have them.'

'Very true, sir, there is not,' replied Lowten: and then both master and man pondered for a few seconds, with animated countenances, as if they were reflecting upon one of the most beautiful and ingenious discoveries the intellect of man had ever made, etc."

In treating of the dishonest little legal practitioners Dickens indulges his taste for burlesque humour. Witness the scene in

which Dodson and Fogg are visited by Mr. Pickwick, and the two lawyers try to provoke him to commit an assault or to use slanderous language, and Sam Weller without ceremony drags his master out of the office. Mr. Sampson Brass is also a subject of rollicking humour, as is his sister, the fair Sally. Witness the scene where Brass visits Quilp at his wharf on the Thames and is compelled to drink spirits neat and almost boiling, and is made sick by the pipe the little monster makes him smoke; or when Brass, aided by Quilp's wife and mother-in-law, is writing a description of the supposed corpse of his missing client, and recalls Quilp's characteristics, "his wit and humour, his pathos and his umberella." I confess I do not quite understand how Brass was able to get Kit imprisoned; our author's law appears a little stagey. I should say that type of lawyer had disappeared; but I once did come across a Dodson and Fogg, though

a pianoforte, not a widow, was the cause of my costly experience.

Let us now turn from the somewhat painful abuses which Dickens denounces to a more cheerful subject, that of Parliamentary elections.

Here I can speak frivolously, for I am one of those who have grave doubts whether a good or a bad system of election, in my country at any rate, matters much, for choose them how you will, the representatives of the people never seem to represent anything but their own private interests. Let us take Mr. Pickwick's experiences at Eatandswill, which is, I believe, the now disfranchised borough of Sudbury in Suffolk, about fourteen miles from Bury St. Edmunds, whither Mr. Pickwick started on his expedition to thwart the plans of Mr. Jingle, and had his famous experience at the young ladies' school. His friend, Mr. Perker, was, you will recollect, the agent of the Hon. Samuel Slumkey.

"'Spirited contest, my dear Sir,' said Mr. Perker to Pickwick.

'I am delighted to hear it,' said Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands.

'I like to see sturdy patriotism, on whatever side it is called forth; — and so it's a spirited contest?'

'O yes,' said the little man, 'very much so indeed. We have opened all the public houses in the place, and left our adversary nothing but the beer shops — masterly stroke of policy that, my dear Sir, eh?'"

The prospects however were doubtful, for Mr. Fizkin had thirty-three electors locked up in the coach house of the White Hart. All the hotels were full of voters and Mrs. Perker had brought green parasols for the wives of doubtful supporters of Mr. Slumkey. Then came the day of nomination and "During the whole time of the polling, the town was in a perpetual fever of excitement. Everything was conducted on the most lib-

eral and delightful scale. Exciseable articles were remarkably cheap at all the public houses. . . . A small body of electors remained unpolled until the very last day. They were calculating and reflecting persons, who had not yet been convinced by the arguments of either party, although they had had frequent conferences with each. One hour before the close of the poll Mr. Perker solicited the honour of a private interview with these intelligent, these noble, these patriotic men. It was granted. His arguments were brief, but satisfactory. They went in a body to the poll; and when they returned, the honourable Samuel Slumkey, of Slumkey Hall, was returned also."

To persons accustomed to modern Parliamentary elections in England this passage would need a commentary to be understood. The nomination and the show of hands amid riotous disorder is a thing of the past. The protracted poll, lasting in

some cases for several days, the non-resident electors billeted in the inns at the candidates' expense, and the whole scene Dickens depicted belongs to another age which is almost incomprehensible to the England of to-day.

Sam Weller's story of his father and the voters had more point in those days than now. Mr. Weller was offered a twenty-pound note ($100) and it was suggested that if the coach were overturned by the bank of a canal it might be a good thing. Strangely enough an accident happened. To quote Sam's words: "You wouldn't believe it, sir," continued Sam, with a look of inexpressible impudence at his master, "that on the wery day he came down with those voters, his coach *was* upset on that 'ere wery spot, and every man of them was turned into the canal." In the unreformed Parliament, before 1832, the boroughs had each its own peculiar electorate; and I am glad to use for my information a book written by two

learned scholars now in America, Mr. and Mrs. Porritt. In not a few places the election of members was vested in the Mayor and burgesses, in others the different guilds and corporations were the electors. In one case the franchise was more democratic even than now, the very tramps who slept in the town of Preston became voters. Not infrequently the members were nominated by a local magnate. In many cases the town sold its nomination to the highest bidder; and this was occasionally the case at Eatanswill, if so be that it represents Sudbury. But frequently the electors were the so-called "freemen" of the borough. The name takes us back to mediæval times, when slavery was in existence, or to the days when the guilds were close corporations, and no one not free of them could practise any trade. But in later times the freedom was a matter of inheritance and could even be taken up, in some cases, by marriage with a

"freeman's" daughter. The franchise in many towns was enjoyed only by these freemen, and in Ipswich, to take an example familiar to me, most of them were non-resident.

In an election in the "twenties," which is reputed to have cost the candidates £30,000 ($150,000), I have been told that they chartered ships to bring electors from Holland. This is, doubtless, why all the hotels in Eatandswill were crowded, and explains the elder Mr. Weller's adventure by the canal. Bribery was illegal; and in a famous case in 1819 Sir Manasseh Massey Lopez was fined £10,000 ($50,000) and imprisoned for two years for practising it at Grampound. But it was an exceptional case; and the Lords threw out the bill for disfranchising the borough.

Now we are on the subject of political life I cannot resist reminding you of a perfectly delightful sketch of a political fraud

in the person of Mr. Gregsbury in "Nicholas Nickleby." He comes into the story for no particular reason except to give Dickens the joy of describing the sort of man he had doubtless observed when he was a pressman in the House of Commons.

Nicholas is present when the deputation arrives to request Mr. Gregsbury to resign his seat, and Mr. Pugstyles is its spokesman.

"'My conduct, Pugstyles,' said Mr. Gregsbury, looking round upon the deputation with gracious magnanimity, 'my conduct has been, and ever will be, regulated by a sincere regard for this great and happy country. Whether I look at home, or abroad; whether I behold the peaceful industrious communities of our island home: her rivers covered with steamboats, her road with locomotives, her streets with cabs, her skies with balloons of a power and magnitude hitherto unknown in the history of aëronautics — I say whether I look at home, etc.,

etc., I clasp my hands, and, turning my eyes to the broad expanse above my head, exclaim, Thank God I am a Briton.'" When even this outburst does not meet with approval and the deputation presses Mr. Gregsbury to resign, the member reads a letter he has addressed to Mr. Pugstyles in which he says, "Actuated by no personal motives, but moved only by high and great constitutional considerations . . . I would rather keep my seat, and intend doing so." No, in all the changes time has brought, one thing does not change — our politicians are still the same.

In "Our Mutual Friend" our author touches once more on the state of the poor and their terror of "the parish." No one who has read this novel, with its wealth of characters amazing even for Dickens — for even in his other works you fail to find so many types as Bella Wilfer, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin, Fascination Fledgby, the dolls' dressmaker,

Mr. Silas Wegg, Mr. Venus, Rogue Riderhood, the Veneerings, to mention only a few — no one, I say, can ever forget the old washerwoman Betty Higden and her horror of the workhouse, how it haunted her whole life and gave an additional terror to death, that thereby she would fall into the hands of the parish and be buried by it. And in this novel Dickens is as severe on the injudicious charity of philanthropists and faddists as he is upon the callousness of the guardians of the poor. There is no more terrible satire on the mistakes of the education of that age than his delineation of Bradley Headstone. I have never to my recollection read any discussion of this character but I have often thought that in Headstone and Charley Hexam, his pupil, he is giving a warning of the dangers of modern education.

Universal education was not yet adopted in England, which was the most backward of countries in this respect. But it was in

the air, and Dickens foresaw that some of the principles adopted would prove serious to the community. He dwells on the mechanical efficiency of the teaching; the learning to write essays on any subject exactly one slate long, for example; on the miscellaneous and useless information imparted; on a Bible teaching which has nothing to do with vital religion. Dickens recognised that the education of all classes was killing individuality, and not fostering moral or spiritual qualities. He recognised that in the type of Charley Hexam it was encouraging a desire for "respectability," consisting, not in taking one's coat off to work, but in working in a black coat, which was killing the finer feelings in which the poor often shew to the advantage of the rich. And in Bradley Headstone Dickens points out, that all this smug education was powerless to restrain the elemental ferocity of human nature in the schoolmaster, who looked natural in

Rogue Riderhood's clothes, and not himself in his decent black coat. There was latent in him all the ferocity of a hardened criminal; and recent events are shewing how powerless education is really to civilise the heart of man.

I have spoken of the need of a map of London to understand Dickens, and I shall now take an extract from "Oliver Twist" to illustrate this remark. Oliver has just met with John Dawkins, otherwise the Artful Dodger, who offered to take him to a lodging. "It was nearly eleven o'clock when they reached the turnpike at Islington. They crossed from the Angel into St. John's Road; struck down the small street which terminates at Sadlers Wells Theatre; through Exmouth Street and Coppice Row; down the little court by the side of the workhouse; across the classic ground which once bore the name of Hockley in the Hole, thence to little Saffron Hill the Great and so on to when they

reached the bottom of the hill, his (Oliver's) conductor, catching him by the arm, pushed open the door of a house near Field Lane."

Now I almost defy anyone to find all these localities in a modern map. You would have, in the first place, to start in the middle of London at the Angel at Islington. Sadlers Wells is now in the midst of a network of streets. It was only when I turned to Northcock's history of London, which has a good map dated 1772, that all was plain. Islington was a village outside London; Sadlers Wells a suburban resort; Exmouth street was not yet built;[1] but Coppice row, Hockley in the Hole, and of course Saffron Hill and Field Lane, were all easily found.

In speaking of this great delineator of human character as now needing explanation and comment, I have no doubt that he belongs to that small group of writers whose

[1] It must have been named after Admiral Pellew (Lord Exmouth), who captured Algiers in 1816.

works belong to all ages. We hear complaints in England that young people do not read him; and the same were made when we were young.

But with us, and I believe with you, his popularity from time to time revives, and no educated man or woman can ignore him. The fact that he has appealed so strongly to the imagination of America is alone a proof of the universality of his genius; for, like Shakespeare and the classics of all countries, his works are the property, not of one people, but of the world. He is not perfect; we should not love him so much if he were. He has faults of style, of arrangement, even of taste. It is easy to criticise; but because of his very excellences, his humour, his pathos, his wide sympathy, his hatred of injustice and oppression, it seems almost presumption to endeavour to sing his praises.

May I conclude with those prophetic words he puts into the mouth of Martin Chuzzlewit on leaving your country, which he made his

own by denouncing its failings as unsparingly as he did those of his own mother land, in the hope that both you and we, America and England, would conquer them and become the common benefactors of humanity.

"'I am thinking,' said Mark, 'that if I was a painter and was called upon to paint the American Eagle, how should I do it?'

'Paint it as like an Eagle as you could, I suppose.'

'No,' said Mark, 'that wouldn't do for me, sir. I should want to draw it like a Bat for its shortsightedness, like a Bantam for its bragging, like a Magpie for its honesty, like a Peacock for its vanity, like an Ostrich for putting its head in the mud and thinking nobody sees it.'

'And like a Phœnix for its power of springing from the ashes of its faults and vices and soaring up into the sky.'

'Well, Mark, let us hope so.'"

APPENDIX TO LECTURE VI

To shew Dickens' care in collecting his facts the following report of a case relating to Yorkshire Schools is of interest. It was supplied to the author by C. S. Kenny, Esq., Downing Professor of the Laws of England, Cambridge.

Chapter II. The Relevancy of Evidence

[*Evidence must be confined to the points in issue.*]

BOLDRON *v.* WIDDOWS

Westminster N. P. Sittings. 1824.

1 Carrington and Payne 65.

This was an action for defamation. The declaration stated that the plaintiff kept a school, and had divers scholars; and that the defendant spoke of him in his business of a schoolmaster certain words there set out. The words were variously laid in different counts; but they were, in substance, that the scholars were ill fed, and badly lodged, had had the itch, and were full of vermin. Some of the counts laid the loss of certain scholars as special damage. Pleas — the general issue; and justifications, that the whole of the words were true.

For the plaintiff, several witnesses proved the speaking of the words, and that the boys were boarded, educated, and clothed, by the plaintiff, at £20 a year each, near Richmond in Yorkshire: and the usher of the school was called to prove that the boys were well

fed and well lodged, and had no itch. In his cross-examination it appeared that there were between eighty and ninety boys; that about seventy of them had had a cutaneous disease; and that they all slept in three rooms close to the roof, with no ceiling; and that there was a general combing of the heads of the whole school every morning over a pewter dish, and that the vermin combed out were thrown into the yard; no boy was free from them. A piece of bread of a perfectly black hue was shewn him: he did not think the bread in the school so black as that.

The witness having stated that he had himself been at the Appleby grammar-school, the plaintiff's counsel wished to ask him what was the quality of the provisions used by the plaintiff's school, compared with those consumed by the Appleby grammar-school.

The defendant's counsel objected to this.

Abbott, C.J. That cannot be asked; what is done at any particular school is not evidence. You may shew the general treatment of boys at schools, and shew that the plaintiff treated the boys here as well as they could be treated for £20 a year each, for board, education, and clothes.

One of the plaintiff's scholars was then called to prove the plaintiff's good treatment of them.

In cross-examination, the defendant's counsel wished to ask him whether the plaintiff did not set the boys to plant potatoes in school hours?

Abbott, C.J. I do not think you can ask this; the issue here being whether the plaintiff's scholars were ill

fed, badly lodged, had the itch, and had vermin. Nothing has been said as to their being badly educated. Their education is not in question here.

Gurney, for the defendant, addressed the jury, and called witnesses to prove the truth of the words.

Verdict for the plaintiff, damages £120.

LECTURE VII

Mid-Victorianism. W. M. Thackeray

The word respectable has a strange history. In the days of the later Roman Empire its equivalent "spectabilis" was applied to the highest dignitaries. In France it is a title of honour — "votre respectable mère" means something very different from "your respectable mother." In England respectability is associated with primness, faded clothes, and possibly necessary penuriousness. One would not seek a way to a lady's good graces by describing her as a respectable woman. When we say a man's abilities are "respectable," it is in order to get someone else to give him employment. It is a word which conveys ridicule ever since the famous dialogue in Thurtell's trial for murder:

Witness. The prisoner was a respectable man.

Counsel. What do you mean by respectable?

Witness. Well — er — he kept a gig.

The characteristic of Mid-Victorian society was respectability, and I shall try to show that its chief exponent W. M. Thackeray was its prophet.

The English race has always had a bias in favour of what is known as Puritanism, not only in religion but in life. I think it may be said of us that we dislike intensely to have a thing forbidden by law, but love to have many forbidden by custom. We abhor a number of notices put up to say we must do this or that, that most things are forbidden, we detest a police who interfere with the ordinary affairs of life and force us under penalty to submit to trivial regulations. But we have no objections to the erection of a number of conventions far more irksome

than any legal code of morals and we submit to a police system created by ourselves, more vigilant, more inquisitive, more given to informing than any secret service in the world. For what laws were ever devised more drastic in their operation than those of public opinion, and has any *vehmgericht* or inquisition ever judged unseen and condemned unheard on the report of the police, in a more secret and summary fashion than that of the tea table of Mrs. Grundy? Never was society more under the thrall of these dominating influences than in the Early and Mid-Victorian age.

The reason for this seems plain enough. The eighteenth century had been distinguished for the coarseness of its language, manners, and morals. The upper classes combined a good deal of old world politeness with a surprisingly frank disregard of moral considerations. There were conspicuous exceptions, but the singular impunity enjoyed

by men of high rank and position made them often callous as to the opinion of their inferiors. The lower classes were accustomed to brutal sports and cruel amusements and unrestrained by any effective police, besides being entirely uneducated. The middle class, which was daily becoming more and more important to the life of the nation owing to the rapid development of trade and manufacture, was gradually monopolising the political control of the nation. It was in this class that the evangelical and Methodist movements had achieved their chief successes; and those who composed it were fundamentally serious minded. Under the Regency and during the reign of George IV and William IV the court was essentially aristocratic, and neither monarch gave it any prestige on the side of morality. Queen Victoria took a middle-class view of life; domesticity was the key-note of her reign. The Prince Consort was the model husband and father,

so correct, so admirable, so exemplary, that even now we are apt to forget how able and wise a man he was and how heavy a debt his adopted country owes him.

One of the effects of the Victorian age was that England awoke to a most amazing sense of its own virtue. People were continually contrasting the present with the past, to the disadvantage of the latter. In the 'forties,' and even 'fifties,' many people could remember the time when it was unsafe to approach London after dusk on account of the highwaymen, when men, women, and children were hung by the score for the merest trifles, when duels were of almost daily occurrence, when the grossest abuses existed in church and state, when immorality in the highest quarters flaunted itself unashamed before the world. Old men could recall a time when to get drunk and use the foulest possible language was almost necessary, if a man were not to be written down as a milksop.

And the contrast was almost too delightful to the newly emancipated middle class in their neat villas with trim gardens, whence they went to church decorously, sat in their select pew, their large families around them, and thanked God that they were not as other people's wicked ancestors had been.

In one of Lever's novels — I believe — an Irish solicitor was asked by an Englishman the reason for the success of a famous Counsellor with juries and replied, "He first butthers them up; and then slithers them down." I am going to take the same liberty with that great novelist W. M. Thackeray, only I protest that my butter is genuine and were I an Irishman myself I should say it came from the heart. I cheerfully bow before the genius of England's master of fiction. His characters are my friends, his kindly wisdom my delight, his pathos can move me almost to tears, his cynicism is a constant stimulant. His style is to me

incomparable and fills me with envy and despair. His books are my best companions in sickness and in health, in depression and in my most cheerful moments. If I am his critic, it is because he is so old a friend that I love him alike for his weaknesses and peculiarities and for his great merits. With the utmost humility I commend his scholarship and appreciation of the literature of the eighteenth century. His "Four Georges" and "English Humorists" are to me models of what literary lectures should be. I could praise him till I wearied my audience, and all my praise would be absolutely genuine.

No student of Thackeray can fail to admire the way in which he prepared himself by study for his historical novels. In "Esmond" and the "Virginians" he saturated himself in the literature of his period. He could catch the style of the pamphleteer, the newspaper writer; he reproduces the conversation of the wits so as occasionally to deceive

the very elect. The descriptions of life at Castlewood, of the service in Winchester Cathedral, the letters of the old Marchioness of Esmond, Henry Esmond's contribution to the *Spectator*, the account of the battle of Wynandael, etc., are all masterpieces. So are some of the minor characters in these novels—Will Esmond in the "Virginians," for example, Father Holt, Esmond's Jesuit tutor and, above all, Parson Sampson in the "Virginians." But his principal actors are not, I think, of the eighteenth century at all. They are the people Thackeray himself knew, in the garb of their supposed period, but really men and women of the middle of the nineteenth century. Esmond and George Warrington, Rachel, Lady Castlewood, and her incomparable daughter Beatrix are, with all their perfect accessories, modern men and women playing a part, admirably it is true, but still a part, in the comedy of a bygone age. In the days of Anne and the

Georges I am confident no one felt or acted or thought as they are represented by our author. It is only when Thackeray is out of sympathy with his heroes that he makes them true to their age. In "Barry Lyndon" we have the genuine article, so we do in his uncle, the Chevalier de Balibari, so again in every character in "Catherine," which was intended as a burlesque. But in the more serious novels I feel somehow that Thackeray did not really transport his characters into a bygone age.

Of this he seems to have been conscious himself. When he drew pictures to illustrate "Vanity Fair," he did not depict Rawdon Crawley as a Waterloo guardsman, nor Becky as a lady of fashion in 1816, nor Pitt as an aristocratic member of the Clapham set. He drew them as the people he knew himself and dressed them in the costume of his own time, thus acknowledging how he really regarded his own creations.

The ruling aristocracy came to an end when the Reform Bill was passed in 1832, but their prestige remained. The middle class entered the Promised Land and took their share in its government: but not triumphantly. I may almost say they were abashed by their success. The peers could no more return a great proportion of the House of Commons, they could no more promote or cast down common men much as they pleased. They dare no longer defy public opinion as their predecessors had done. Yet to the middle class they still appeared august enough. Their manners, their breeding, the state in which many lived, inspired no little awe among those immediately below them. Society was divided into castes almost as rigidly, though less formally, than in India to-day. The old Whig nobility still considered themselves divinely called to rule the country and to dictate to the sovereign. The county fami-

lies held aloof from the inhabitants of the town; and barely tolerated the professional classes. The beneficed clergy, barristers, medical men, lesser army officers, etc., scorned the traders. The wholesale trader held the retail storekeeper in scorn and so on *ad infinitum*. But in England the barriers of rank were never insurmountable, and in a free country anyone was at liberty to try to climb them. Hence everybody endeavored with varying success to ascend the social ladder, and did not scruple to use other people as stepping stones. Thus arose the fierce fight to get into what is still called "Society" and the rampant snobbery which Thackeray was never tired of denouncing. With this we may begin the investigation of his attitude towards the society of his age.

The great example of this pushfulness is Thackeray's most delightful creation in "Vanity Fair," Becky Sharp, though she as-

suredly was no snob. With all her doubtful antecedents, however, Becky, at least, married into the ranks of the aristocracy; and in her husband our author has created so real a person that one is actually disposed to question whether he was rightly judged by the author of his being. We are told that Rawdon Crawley was stupid, badly educated, unaccustomed to good society, at least when ladies were present. But if he were such an oaf why did his rich aunt Miss Crawley, who had known Sheridan and the wits, make such a fuss about him and make him sit at table with herself and Becky because "we are the only Christians in the county." Why was he allowed to act in the Charades at Gaunt House on that memorable night of his wife's triumph? The fact is that Thackeray was obsessed with the idea that all young men of fashion were necessarily stupid. It is a thoroughly middle-class tradition and we find it constantly in his

pages. Because of certain mannerisms and affectations, because they cared little for literature, because they fought duels and gambled, all young men about town were not necessarily fools; and it was a mistake to depict Rawdon Crawley as on the one hand uncommonly sharp and also a fool. But it is because Thackeray's genius has created such a living being that we are indignant at his failure to make him conform to our ideas of what we think he really was. We regard him as a living man whom his creator has misjudged, and not as the figment of the brain of the author.

"Vanity Fair," however, holds up the mirror to social England in the unrivalled description of Becky's climb up the rungs of the ladder till she arrived at the very apex of fashionable success. Her husband's position gave her every opportunity with the men, and with them it was easy enough. Where her genius was seen was in her dealings

with her own sex. Apart from the skill displayed in the description of her career, she is interesting to us as an example of the gradual invasion of society by those who were born outside its pale. Men, as we have seen, like Creevey, occasionally managed to make themselves indispensable, but for a woman to do so was a most difficult task. At first Becky was a complete failure so far as her own sex was concerned. Miss Crawley was never taken in for a moment. She recognised her attractions and allowed her to amuse her, but had no idea of regarding Becky as anything more than a sort of upper servant. "She's just a companion as you are, Briggs, only infinitely more amusing." When she married Rawdon, she did for herself so far as the old lady's good graces were concerned. In her early married life she was equally unsuccessful. At Paris, where her husband was in the army of occupation, her success with the men and her popularity

with the great ladies of French society, owing to her mastery of the language, only increased the bitterness of her countrywomen against her. When she came back to London, men crowded her little house in Curzon Street, but the ladies held sternly aloof. Social distinctions were very marked in the early "twenties" in London, and the great ladies of the day had no idea of allowing people of doubtful birth to push themselves into their company. You doubtless recollect how Jane Austen describes the dinner party at Lady Caroline de Burgh's in "Pride and Prejudice" to which Elizabeth and Mr. and Mrs. Collins were invited, and the studied rudeness with which her ladyship treated her guests in order to keep them conscious of their inferiority. We find the same sort of thing in Lord Lytton's early novel "Pelham," where the man of fashion treats the people he meets in the country as beings of a different species. Every description of fashionable life tells

the same story and we have to realise this to understand "Vanity Fair."

I must ask you to pardon me if I linger over this theme and try to elaborate it. Becky had had a good deal of experience before her chance came, and she was fit to take it. Her brother-in-law, Pitt Crawley, was always a little smitten by her charm and determined to do the right thing by Rawdon by inviting him and Becky to Queen's Crawley. Becky strikes the right note at once — they go by coach, "it looks more humble." Once there, she captivates Lady Jane by affecting interest in her nursery. But these are only the outworks, Lady Jane is kind and soft, Pitt is pompous and easily flattered. But the citadel remained unvanquished in the person of Lady Southdown, Pitt's mother-in-law. Here we have Thackeray's counterpart of Lady Caroline de Burgh, a countess of austere evangelical piety, combined with a firm

but by no means constant belief in patent medicines and more or less irregular clergy and medical practitioners, who forces her doctrines and her doctorings without mercy upon her dependants and inferiors. "She would order Gaffer Hodge to be converted, as she would order Goody Hicks to take a James' powder, without appeal, resistance or benefit of clergy." Our author describes her as "this awful missionary of the Truth," driving about her estate administering tracts and medicaments.

A lady so domineering, so aristocratic, so virtuous could not be expected to receive poor Becky with her doubtful antecedents and still more questionable conduct. She vows she will leave Queen's Crawley if ever Mrs. Rawdon sets foot in the home. But Pitt Crawley knows womankind: "She has spent her last dividends, and has nowhere to go. A countess living in an inn is a ruined woman." This shrewd diagnosis is

correct: her ladyship remains and manifests her disapproval of Becky by a stony silence. That astute little woman, however, is not daunted. She reads the countess's tracts; she is troubled about her soul. Her ladyship cannot resist the temptation of snatching such a brand from the burning. She hopes to convert Becky, who is prepared for a greater sacrifice. She offers her body as well as her soul, and consults Lady Southdown about her health. The victory is won. That night the fearsome form of the great lady appears in night attire at Becky's bedside and forces her to drink the decoction she has prepared. Her victim swallows it and makes so good a story of the incident that her male friends are convulsed, and thus, "for the first time in her life, Lady Southdown was made amusing." It is when Mrs. Rawdon Crawley forces her way into the company of the real leaders of London society that we get a true glimpse of the social life of the period,

and I shall ask your permission to read the well-known but I think rarely quoted account of her début at the dinner party at Gaunt House. To me, I confess, it seems inimitable. I must, however, remind you of the scenes which lead up to it. First, there is Lord Steyne's request or rather order to the ladies of his household to call on Becky, which they do, and when his lordship pays her a visit he is amused to find her gloating over the cards they have left. "All women," he says, "are alike. Everybody is striving for what is not worth having. . . . You will go to Gaunt House. It's not half so nice as here. My wife is as gay as Lady Macbeth and my daughters as cheerful as Regan and Goneril. . . . And *gare aux femmes;* look out and hold your own! How the women will bully you!" Then there is the interview of Lord Steyne with his wife and daughters. Lady Steyne is told to write and ask Becky to dinner. Lady Gaunt, the eldest son's wife,

says she will not be present. Lady George, the second son's wife, reminds him of the money she brought into the family — all in vain. Steyne treats them to a vigorous allocution. "You will be pleased to receive her with the utmost cordiality, as you will receive all persons whom I present to this house. . . . Who is master of it, and what is it? This temple of virtue belongs to me. And if I invite all Newgate and all Bedlam here, by — they shall be welcomed." The ladies of course yield but they make it hot for their presumptuous little guest.

"It was when the ladies were alone that Becky knew that the tug of war would come. And then indeed the little woman found herself in such a situation as made her acknowledge the correctness of Lord Steyne's caution to her to beware of the society of ladies above her own sphere. As they say that persons who hate Irishmen most are Irishmen: so, assuredly the greatest tyrants

over women are women. When poor little Becky, alone with the ladies, went up to the fireplace whither the great ladies had repaired, the great ladies marched away and took possession of a table of drawings. When Becky followed them to the table of drawings, they dropped off one by one to the fire again. She tried to speak to the children (of whom she was commonly fond in public places), but master George Gaunt was called away by his mamma; and the stranger was treated with such cruelty finally, that even Lady Steyne pitied her, and went up to speak to the friendless little woman."

Later on she had her triumph, for when the gentlemen came in they crowded round the piano. "And Mr. Paul Jefferson Jones (an American guest) thought he had made a conquest of Lady Gaunt by going up to her ladyship, and praising her delightful friend's first-rate singing." Once Becky had been recognised at Gaunt House, other ladies began

to acknowledge her, none the less eagerly because she was known not to be too favourably regarded by the Steyne females. The great Lady Fitz Willis paid her marked attention. When anyone was taken up by this lady, her position was safe. Not that she was amusing or clever or beautiful, "being a faded person of fifty seven": but nevertheless she was a recognised leader whose social verdict was undisputed. Under her ægis Becky was safe; and it was thrown over our little adventuress because of an early rivalry between Lady Fitz Willis and Lady Steyne. Now the success of Becky with all her disadvantages was not undeserved. She had wit, tact, courage. She could flatter where necessary: but she could defy an enemy when she thought fit. Very great ladies feared her biting sarcasm if they provoked it; and she won her place because of her weapons of defiance as well as her powers of attraction. She fell from

her high position because she was found out; but, even after her exposure and Rawdon's eye-opening to her unfaithfulness to his cause, she fought on in the social battle; and the last glimpse of her is at a charity bazaar!

But the society which Becky Sharp conquered by her brains was soon to be stormed by wealth. And Thackeray describes the process in the novels of a later period. The strife was only beginning in "Vanity Fair." Lord Steyne's younger son, we are told, married the daughter of the great banker Lord Helvellyn; but this was exceptional. The city was just beginning to intermarry with the lesser nobility. Miss Schwartz, the rich West Indian, who was destined for young George Osborne, was married into the noble family of McMull. The younger Miss Osborne married, after much haggling over settlements, Frederick Bullock of Hulker Bullock and Co., whose family was allied with the

impecunious nobility; but she was completely out of society. She would have gone on her knees to Gaunt House to be asked to dinner there. Her father, whose means would have procured him an entrance into any society a few years later, then lived in an unfashionable part of London, and his dinner parties were dull, pompous gatherings, the most honoured guest being Sir Thomas Coffin, "the hanging judge" for whose benefit the famous tawny port was always produced.

It was about a decade after the Reform Bill of 1832 that the walls of the Jericho of Good Society began to shake at the trumpet sound of wealth. Before we enter upon the subject let me remind you of two marks of the great novelist's skill, (1) the names he gives his characters and (2) his careful tracing of their pedigrees. The Earl of Dorking lives at Chanteclere, his eldest son is Viscount Rooster, his daughters are the Ladies Adelaide and Hennie Pulleine. Who cannot

with a very little knowledge of London conjure up Gaunt House and Great Gaunt Square? The character of the Marquis of Steyne is shown in his numerous titles. He is Viscount Hellborough and Baron Pitchley and Grillsbury, etc., etc. The Crawley family name their sons after the most popular man of the day. So Sir Walpole Crawley was evidently born about 1730, Sir Pitt between 1757 and 1761, the Reverend Bute about 1761, Sir Pitt, the second, after the time younger Pitt rose to power — that is, later than 1784, and Rawdon when Lord Rawdon was the favourite of the Prince of Wales.

The pedigrees, especially of the rising families, are traced very carefully. Do you remember Mr. Foker, the charming young man of fashion in "Pendennis"? His unfailing good humour, his shrewdness, his gaudy garments, his advice to Pendennis, when he was infatuated with Miss Fotheringay, and when he was going the pace at Oxbridge; his

love for Miss Amory and his recovery when he found out how heartless she was? Though he plays a minor part, his character is as subtle a delineation as any by this master hand. Now notice how we get this blend of aristocracy and commercialism; for Foker is a true gentleman, honourable, chivalrous, with healthy instincts, yet with a good deal of the man of business in him, for all his idleness and eccentricity a man not easily duped. In the "Virginians" George Warrington, when lately married and very poor, gets to know a Mr. Voelker, a rich, vulgar but kindly brewer, our hero's grandfather. His father has Anglicised himself and become Mr. Foker whose porter is of world-wide celebrity. He marries an Earl's daughter and yet insists on the family beverage being served at every meal, and Major Pendennis feels bound to taste it when he dines though the old gentleman found it disagreed with him. In Harry Foker, the young man of pleasure, we

have the half-and-half beer and the peerage, and no bad blend either. In Barnes Newcome we have a less attractive type of the same class. The Newcomes are as humble in origin but more pretentious than the Fokers. They do not parade the family business, being bankers; but have discovered a noble ancestry. Their family can be traced back to the "Barber Surgeon of Edward the Confessor." Thomas Newcome, the second founder, had however to begin as a very intelligent factory hand who left his native Newcome, made a moderate fortune, gallantly returned and married a girl of his own class, and became the father of that prince of gentlemen, Colonel Newcome, whose son Clive, Thackeray wishes us to admire, though I confess I find him insufferable. Then his first wife dies and Thomas flies at higher game. He woos and wins the great heiress, pietist, and philanthropist, Sophia Alethea Hobson, to the amazement of the serious

Clapham circle in which she moves. Their twin sons are Sir Brian, who marries Lady Ann Barnes, daughter of the Earl of Kew, whose eldest son is Lord Walham — all neighbouring suburbs of London give the name to this aristocratic family, — and Hobson, a thorough man of business, who marries a lawyer's daughter, and affects the farmer, whilst his wife professes to admire talent. Hobson is shrewd, Brian pompous, and as the former says of himself, you must get up very early in the morning to take him in. If in Foker we have the attractive side, in Sir Brian Newcome's eldest son Barnes we have the other aspect of the blending of birth and business. Had Harry Foker sprung from two noble grandfathers, he might have been just as simple-hearted and good-natured as he now appears, like Lord Southdown in "Vanity Fair," or Ethel Newcome's lover, Lord Kew; but he would not have been quite so shrewd — for it is no impeachment

of a man's natural good sense that he should have been taken in by the purely imaginary virtues of a Blanche Amory. But in Barnes Newcome we see the mixture of the hardness of a well-bred man of the world and the business ability inherited from a commercial ancestry. I cannot resist quoting at some length the introduction of Barnes to his uncle Col. Newcome at Mrs. Hobson Newcome's evening party. The description of it is sketched for the Colonel's benefit, by Frank Honeyman, the popular preacher.

"The Jew with a beard, as you call him, is Herr Von Lungen the eminent haut-boy player . . . At the piano, accompanied by Mademoiselle Lebrun, is Signor Mezzocaldo the great barytone from Rome. Professor Quartz and Baron Hammerstein, celebrated geologists from Germany, are talking with their illustrious *confrère* Sir Robert Craxton, in the door. Do you see that stout gentleman with snuff on his shirt? The eloquent

Dr. McGuffog of Edinburgh talking to Dr. Ettore, who lately escaped the Inquisition at Rome in the disguise of a washerwoman, after undergoing the question several times, the rack and the thumbscrew. . . . That splendid man in the red fez is Kurbash Pasha — another renegade, I deeply lament to say, — a hair-dresser from Marseilles, by name Monsieur Ferchaud —"

But I need not trouble you by reading more. Mrs. Hobson Newcome could not get the aristocracy, so she collected notabilities and felt herself intellectual. As you will remember, the guest of the evening was "Rummum Loll, otherwise his Excellency, otherwise his Highness, . . . the chief proprietor of the diamond mines of Golconda, with a claim of three millions and a half upon the East India Company." The Rummum was the lion of the year and went everywhere, and the whole company was amazed when with the air of the deepest humility

he saluted Colonel Newcome, who in his old-fashioned coat and diamond pin was being mistaken for a Moldavian boyar. At this juncture Barnes comes in and makes himself known to his uncle. The art with which the scene is drawn is consummate. Barnes behaves as a thoroughly well bred man, greets the Colonel with unaffectedly good manners, snubs his aunt by a few quiet words, and finally turns to his uncle to discuss the Rummum. "I know he ain't a prince any more than I am." Then Barnes warms to the subject and frankly asks the Colonel to tell him if the bank can trust the Indian magnate. "The young man of business had dropped his drawl or his languor, and was speaking quite goodnaturedly and selfishly. Had you talked for a week, you could not have made him understand the scorn and loathing with which the Colonel regarded him."

Barnes is of course the villain of the piece:

but the interest in his character to us lies in the fact that he reveals in its worst aspect the blending of two types, the aristocratic, with its pride and narrow exclusiveness, and the commercial, with its rapacious selfishness. In many respects the "Newcomes" is a tragedy, as is seen in Colonel Newcome's quarrel with Barnes and the tale of his ruin in the affair of Rummum Loll's Bundlecund Bank, and the *motive* is the struggle for wealth by one of a class whose first object ought to have been honour and to whom money should have been always a secondary consideration.

Let us however turn now to lighter themes. One of Thackeray's most delightful characters is the old Countess of Kew, the sister of the late Marquis of Steyne and the grandmother of Lord Kew and Ethel Newcome. The old lady frankly, and with a cynicism worthy of her brother, accepts the new order. She marries her daughter, Lady Ann, to Sir Brian Newcome, with complete disregard of

the young lady's preference for her cousin, Tom Poyntz. "Sir Brian Newcome," she would say, "is one of the most stupid and respectable of men; Ann is clever but has not a grain of common sense. They make a very well assorted couple. Her flightiness would have driven any man crazy who had an opinion of his own. She would have ruined any poor man of her own rank. As it is I have given her a husband exactly suited to her. He pays the bills, does not see how absurd she is, keeps order in the establishment and checks her follies. She wanted to marry her Cousin, Tom Poyntz, when they were both very young, and proposed to die of a broken heart . . . a broken fiddlestick! She would have ruined Tom Poyntz in a year, and has no more idea of the cost of a leg of mutton than I have of Algebra." Her ladyship was under no delusions as to the antiquity of her husband's family, the founder of which was a fashion-

able doctor who had attended George III. She recognised that the great houses to which she belonged had had their day and was resolved to make the best she could out of the world she lived in. She had the brains and the character to make that world thoroughly uncomfortable if it did not bow to her will, and with her the old order began to come to an end. "*Was* my grandfather a weaver?" asks Ethel Newcome. Her answer is: "How should I know? And what on earth does it matter, my child? Except the Gaunts, the Howards, and one or two more, there is no good blood in England. You are lucky in sharing some of mine. My poor Lord Kew's grandfather was an apothecary at Hampton Court, and founded the family by giving a dose of rhubarb to Queen Charlotte. As a rule nobody is of good family."

Leaving the novels, we come to the Book of Snobs, where the storming of society is seen at a later stage. In Chapter VII on

"some respectable snobs" we have the rise of the noble family of de Mogyns. The first of this ancient race who appeared above the horizon in these degenerate days was a Mr. Muggins, banker, army contractor, smuggler, and general jobber, lent money to a R-y-l P-rs-n-ge, and by way of payment was made a baronet. His son paid undue attention to Miss Flack at a county ball. Captain Flack, her father, offered the alternative of a duel or marriage, in accordance with the custom of the Irish nation to which he belonged and of the age; young Alured Smith Muggins preferred to marry the lady and on the death of his father became a baronet. The editor of Fluke's Peerage found him a pedigree. The family was really founded by the patriarch Shem, whose grandson began to draw up its pedigree on a papyrus scroll now in the possession of the family. In the days of Boadicea, Hogyn Mogyn of the hundred beeves aspired to marry that

warlike princess. Whether he wooed and also won is not stated, but he married someone and became the ancestor of Mogyn of the golden harp, the black fiend son of Mogyn, ancestor of the princes of Pontydwdlm. These succumbed to the English Kings; but their representative David Gam de Mogins fought bravely at Agincourt and from him Sir Thomas Muggins was descended.

This sounds a mere satire. I turn to Burke's Peerage 1895. I find that the son of a famous contractor, whose father was celebrated for having begun as a navvy and ended as a millionaire many times over, sprang from a very ancient Norman family which became obscure in 1603 and rose again to fame two centuries later. I notice that a brewer now a baron, whose beer had a world-wide fame, was the scion of a noble house, the first of whom was Gamellus who flourished when Henry Beauclerc ruled the land from 1100 to 1134.

One of the ladies of this famous family was christened by the delightful but unusual name of Temperance, but this was in the reign of Charles I before the brewery was established. Are not such pedigrees as ridiculous as any fiction of the brain? But how much is it to be regretted that the writers of our peerages do not study the Book of Snobs. They would at least avoid parodying it at the order of their ennobled patrons. Disraeli, like Thackeray, exposed this business in his novel "Sybil, or the Two Nations."

I need not say, however, that it was not because of their descent from the great Hogyn Mogyn that the de Mogyns got into society. They pushed, they schemed, they suffered rebuffs undaunted, and at last they won the coveted reward. Lady de Mogyns cut her friends as she ascended, and at last became a recognised power in the great world.

The day had scarcely dawned when Thackeray died, when instead of wealth's striving to win a place in society, society sought to obtain the recognition of the very rich. His satire had not to expend itself on aristocrats who hastened to abase themselves before the millionaire, and snobbery changed from a worship of rank to a worship of wealth. Our author has often been criticised for his abuse of the nobility. It has been said that it was prompted by envy. I venture to doubt this. To be as great a satirist as he, a man must feel deeply and have a *saeva indignatio* against a great evil. This, like all his predecessors, Thackeray had. He saw the hardness that the spirit of his age engendered.

In all Thackeray's novels and writings we see how ashamed the new aristocracy was of the trades and businesses by which they made their money and how contemptuous the real aristocracy was of ennobled trade. Lord Steyne sneers at the idea of his son's

wife being a banker's daughter. The Newcomes conveniently forget the weaver from which they sprang. We are sneeringly reminded that Mr. Wenham's father was a coal merchant; Major Pendennis conveniently forgets that his brother was a mere apothecary. But this was not part of the old tradition of England. A very little time before people of high birth felt no shame in being in trade. The Nelsons are as good a family as any, yet Nelson himself served as a common sailor before the mast, and his near relatives kept shops in small towns. Let me read you a passage from a recently published book on Wordsworth:

"Dorothy Wordsworth . . . lived first with her maternal grand-parents, and was not happy with them. She loved an open-air life, and was held closely indoors — serving in fact in a mercer's shop which they kept. . . . In 1788 a change came, for she went to live with her uncle at Forncett Rectory

near Norwich. The Rector was also a Canon of Windsor, and in the Summer of 1792 . . . Dorothy was meeting King George III and his family — the princesses at least . . . and going to races and balls."

Trade was no bar to good society till it was able to buy it and there was a great mingling of classes now rigidly separated. This feeling of shame for having practised some perfectly reputable calling has had I believe very serious results. It has made for the separation of employers and employed. It has caused people to take less pride in integrity and thoroughness and made them desirous of amassing wealth in order to enjoy ease. It has tended to make those of the second generation more desirous to pose as nobles than to follow the calling of their fathers. It has destroyed a commercial aristocracy and has put a plutocracy in its place. It tended for a time to substitute prudery and respectability for real Christianity; and,

before the war at least, even these poor substitutes were growing so out of fashion as to be regretted. It has also deepened the rift between classes. Between the old nobility and the poor there was a certain sympathy. The humbler class appreciated the fact that their rulers were gentlemen, they liked their courage, their courtesy, they did not even object to being ordered by them, their very vices were comprehensible. But they have never had any fellow feeling with a plutocracy; with their present pay-masters they have been more impatient than with their former rulers; and the difficulties of the present age are in no small degree due to the snobbery which Thackeray denounced.

LECTURE VIII

Sport, and Rural England

I hope you will pardon the flippancy of the subject I am about to introduce; but I may say that it is not possible to understand English life without studying it. Though we are getting close to our own times, yet it is evident that society has undergone an almost complete change since the scenes were depicted in the works I am using to-day. Surtees caught the exact moment when the change was coming; and the old order was awaiting the signal to quit the world. In the rural England of the 'forties' and 'fifties,' when the railway was just beginning to invade the countryside, the hunting field was still a national playground where neighbours met, the county

family still the pivot round which rural life moved. But everywhere are signs of the coming change. The *nouveau riche* was buying the old estates, and the Jewish magnate beginning to make his appearance; but the fabric of county society remained as yet unshaken. I can myself remember the gulf that parted socially the county from the town, the landed gentry from the professional classes, when the ownership of land was far more important than the possession of wealth.

I propose to treat my subject from two aspects. First I shall take the so-called sporting novels, which are in themselves a literature, though I mean to confine myself practically to a single author; and, after having touched on this subject, I shall ask you to notice how Anthony Trollope, a writer sometimes tedious, but always observant and often witty, deals with the hierarchy, clerical and lay, of county society.

When St. Thomas a Becket was escaping from his enemies in England, he travelled through Flanders in humble disguise. Once, however, he nearly betrayed himself by stopping and admiring a beautiful falcon. Such discrimination raised the suspicion that the traveller was not a mere peasant or itinerant merchant, but an English gentleman of rank. However, the archbishop managed to escape detection and passed on. This little incident, however, shows that, even in the twelfth century, an expert knowledge of sport was deemed to be characteristic of gentility, and Becket, who had spent his early days in the king's court, instinctively looked with interest on a good bird. Four centuries later a very different archbishop of Canterbury, though he too died a martyr's death, was known as an excellent rider. Thomas Cranmer, the son of a country squire, was, we are specially told, remarkable for the firm and easy way he sat his horse. Unlike Becket, Cranmer

was bred a scholar; but, in later days, he too would have been called a sportsman. About a century later another English primate distinguished himself less creditably in the field. George Abbott, the Puritan predecessor of Laud, was shooting deer; and by pure accident killed a keeper; for which an attempt was made to declare the see of Canterbury canonically vacant. It is much the same with less exalted ecclesiastics. In the middle ages the clergy of England were honourably distinguished for their morality as compared with their continental brethren. Their besetting sin was that nothing could restrain them from hunting. The "hunting" abbot of the middle ages was succeeded by the "hunting parson" of later days. Thackeray's description of the Rev. Bute Crawley would, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to many an English clergyman, from the earliest times down to our own days.

"A tall, stately, jolly, shovel-hatted man. . . . You might see his bay mare a score of miles away from the Rectory house whenever there was a dinner party. . . . He rode to hounds in a pepper-and-salt frock, and was one of the best fishermen in the county."

It is hardly necessary to dilate upon the sporting vocabulary of Shakespeare; or to point out that the correct use of hunting and shooting and hawking terms was considered as test of a man's gentility — nor need I appeal to the severity of the old Forest Laws and the more modern Game Laws, both of which were powerless to restrain the English peasants' inveterate propensity to sport.

Little wonder is it, therefore, that there arose a veritable literature which revolved round the pivot of sport and especially that of hunting.

I need hardly say that the conditions of

the pursuit of game changed with the state of the country. In the middle ages the greater part of England was wooded. The greenwood was the home of the outlaw; and it was said that a squirrel could cross England without touching the ground. The chase was therefore pursued in glades and thickets; and could never have been a very rapid affair. What riding was done in the open country was connected with hawking — a very favourite pastime. Gradually, as the country became more open and the forests disappeared, the fox, which our ancestors regarded as vermin, began to be looked upon as a sacred animal, because of the excellent runs he gave. For a long time the hunting was slow and its arrangements very primitive; those who joined in it being the squire, his friends, and his dependants; but gradually the crack riders began to gather from all parts to where the best hunting was to be had; and Leicestershire became the chief

centre. Fashionable hunting, as opposed to the rural and purely local sport, seems to have begun at the time of the Regency in the days of the "dandies"; and I have a recollection of an oft-quoted description by "Nimrod" of the way in which a stranger was gradually recognised and welcomed when he came among the hunting fraternity at Melton Mowbray. But it is my intention to speak of a later period when hunting had become a sport in which men, who had no connection with the locality, came down from London to take part. In olden days the town sportsman was a theme of constant derision. John Gilpin's ride, and Mr. Winkle's difficulties with his horse, were typical stories. The caricaturists were never tired of depicting the quaint and somewhat dangerous antics of the Londoner with a shotgun, and jokes at his ignorance of all sports were the stock in trade of the humourist. Gradually however these began to fall flat.

As the country became accessible, first by good roads, and then by railways, men from London joined in its pastimes, and proved themselves anything but ridiculous where horse and gun were concerned.

"Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour" is valuable for our purpose because it illustrates so many sides of English country life. The hero is a somewhat shady adventurer who spends half the year in hunting and the rest in talking about it, and is famed for being a guest whom, once you get into your house, it is impossible to eject. He hires his hunters, and sells them if he can at a profit; and, as he can ride almost anything, he is able to show a vicious brute to the greatest advantage, sell him for a good sum, and then make a great favour of taking him back. He generally succeeds in getting invitations, partly because he is supposed to be a rich man, and also on account of a rumour, of which, to do him justice, he is unaware,

that he is able to give people, anxious for notoriety, a good notice in the newspapers.

One can almost smell the English country in winter time as one reads the book and in imagination plough one's way, as the dusk draws on, through the muddy lanes on a tired horse after a long run, which has left one several miles from home with the short winter day closing rapidly. Or, one can feel the exhilaration which the sight of a fox gives when he goes away with the hounds at his heels, apparently their certain prey, and then vanishes as he slips through the next fence, not to be caught, if caught at all, for many a long mile.

The author's description of the different houses visited by Mr. Sponge in his tour gives no bad idea of rural life and sport in the "fifties." The first house which Mr. Sponge honours is Jawleyford Court, inhabited by Mr. Jawleyford, a gentleman of good lineage, but only moderate means, on which he

manages to make an appearance of living in great state. Jawleyford, as his name implies, is a pretentious fellow, apparently hearty and hospitable, but very deceptive to those who come in close contact with him. He poses as a man of culture and refinement, and also as an ardent devotee of the chase. Sponge cares for only one thing on earth, and that is hunting; and he is emphatically a man of one book, namely, a work on London cab fares by a certain Mogg — whether the title is an invention or not, I do not know. When Mr. Sponge has nothing better to do, he takes this work and studies imaginary drives about London, amusing himself by calculating the price of each. One can imagine how this ill-assorted couple — Sponge, who cared for nothing but hunting, and Jawleyford, who liked to pose as a man of culture and refinement — got on together. But Mrs. Jawleyford was impressed with the idea that Sponge was a man of wealth and

was a most eligible suitor for one of her pretty daughters. Consequently she received her guest with much hospitality, and gave him a hearty welcome. The first day was unsuitable for hunting; and Sponge had to amuse himself in the house with his host, who conducted him over his picture gallery, and was intensely disgusted when Sponge failed to recognise the bust of Jawleyford, which was considered a speaking likeness.

The next day, however, Sponge, totally disregarding the enchanting Miss Jawleyfords, started, before breakfast, to a meet of the hounds. We are now introduced to a great county magnate, who is believed to be a caricature of a noble sportsman, well known in his day — the Earl of Scamperdale. He had been kept very short by his father, the previous earl; and, as Viscount Hardup, had acquired very penurious habits, which clave to him after his accession to fortune. Hunting was his only expensive taste: and on

this he spared no necessary outlay. He was always well mounted and his hounds admirably chosen; but he would do almost anything sooner than take his horses through a turnpike gate. He lived in a sort of back room in his splendid house; and his food was of the coarsest description. His only companion was a Mr. Jack Spraggon, who was exactly like him in appearance, rode well, and was quite content to fare like his lordship, if he could get nothing better. This well-assorted couple between them possessed a fine flow of language, though Lord Scamperdale always said that people presumed on him because he was "a lord and could not swear nor use coarse language"; and they contrived to keep the field fairly select, by driving intruders away by their powers of satire and abuse. Now Sponge was a first-rate horseman, but could only afford mounts which were unsound or vicious. His horse, "Multum in Parvo," was the latter. In

appearance he was a low long-backed beast, splendidly made, and as a rule was a docile and tractable creature; but if he took it into his head to bolt, he did so with great determination and no power on earth could stop him. Directly the horse saw Lord Scamperdale's hounds, this propensity asserted itself; and he carried his rider into the midst of the pack, scattering them like sheep and maiming several. Then the floodgates of the Earl's copious vocabulary were opened and poor Sponge was assailed, first by him and, when he sank back exhausted into his saddle, by Jack Spraggon. If I recollect aright, the latter on this or some other occasion called Sponge a "sanctified, putrefied, methodistical, puseyite pig-jobber," for Surtees is very careful to put no real bad language into the mouth of his characters. From this time forward Lord Scamperdale takes a violent dislike to Sponge and plots with all his might to get rid of him. His determi-

nation is increased when on another occasion Sponge's horse bolts, not this time into the hounds, but into the Earl himself and knocks him off sprawling on the ground. The story, however, is useful to our purpose because it reveals the different types of country life, and the graduated hierarchy of its society. The Earl of Scamperdale is, of course, a caricature; but with all his boorishness and eccentricity, he is quite conscious that, as a nobleman, he is a great personage. His hounds are not a subscription pack, but are supported entirely at his own expense; and his bad language to strangers has at least the advantage of keeping his field small and select for the benefit of the residents in his neighbourhood, who put up with his eccentricities partly because they really regard his rank and position; and also because his lordship shows them the best of sport. Jawleyford, whose daughter Scamperdale ultimately married, represents the

country squire, not well off but pretentious, keeping up a sort of pinchbeck dignity, yet a member of the hierarchy of which the peer was also a member, though more highly placed.

Less reputable, but of the same order, is Sir Harry Scattercash, of Non-Such Hall, on whom Sponge inflicts himself after he has been driven out of the Flat Hat hunt, as Lord Scamperdale's pack was named. Sir Harry is a young man, who has come unexpectedly into his title and estate after marrying an actress; and he is engaged in drinking himself to death and dissipating his money. His house is full of his wife's theatrical friends, who make themselves thoroughly at home, and Sir Harry has apparently inherited a pack of hounds, managed on a very different system to that adopted by Scamperdale, whose motto is efficiency with economy. Sponge, who, with all his vulgarity, is a first-rate sportsman, takes this

motley pack in hand and makes even Sir Harry's hounds kill their fox in fine style. In fact, on one occasion, when he has outdistanced the mixed field which attended the baronet's meets, he actually changes foxes with Lord Scamperdale, and a fine scene ensues in which Mr. Spraggon surpasses himself in the variety of his language. Not that two such adventurers as Sponge and Spraggon are real enemies; and they meet on neutral ground in the house of a third type of Squire. Mr. Puffington, the son of a wealthy manufacturer, has bought an estate and set up a pack of hounds. The delineation of this character is extremely clever; and shows how the author realises the change which is coming over country life. Scamperdale, Jawleyford, and Sir Harry all belong to the old landed aristocracy. Puffington is a new man. His money is in the land like theirs; but he is independent of his estate. In his desire to be popular

he allows his tenants to rob him and his labourers to poach his game. He maintains a pack of foxhounds, and entertains magnificently. But he is not really liked, and is regarded as an interloper. Thinking Sponge is a literary man and that he will trumpet the fame of his pack in the newspapers, Puffington invites him to stay in his house and entertains him royally.

Jack Spraggon is also one of the invited guests; and Sponge lends him one of his horses. They have a famous run with the hounds; and when they get home, in the interval before dinner, Spraggon tells Sponge that Puffington, their host, expects to have a flaming account of his hunt in the newspapers; and that their reception is due to the fact that Sponge is believed to be a great writer on sporting subjects. As, however, he does not know how to do it, Spraggon offers to dictate an account of the run; and Sponge settles down at the table, having

used his friend's razor to cut the pen. The run is described in true journalistic style; and, when Sponge, who is an indifferent penman, exclaims "Hard work authorship," Jack Spraggon says that he could go on for ever. Sponge retorts, "It's all very well for you to do the talking, but it's the 'writing' and the craning and the spelling." However, the manuscript is sent off to the local paper, and falls into the hands of a daughter of the proprietor. As she cannot make head or tail to Sponge's writing, she edits it as best she can, calling "a ravishing scent" an exquisite perfume; and making the run not less than ten miles "as the cow goes" instead of as the "crow flies."

That evening there is a grander banquet than ever; and Spraggon and Sponge get hold of a rich young fellow, a Mr. Pacey. Spraggon persuades Pacey, who fancies himself a very sharp blade indeed, that Sponge is a greenhorn, with the result that at the

end of the dinner he buys Sponge's horse, Multum in Parvo, at a very low figure. As, however, that famous quadruped manages to throw Mr. Pacey, and also his guardian Major Screw, Sponge gets the horse back with a sum of money as a compensation for the inconvenience to which he has been put, and generously gives Mr. Pacey a bit of valuable advice: never to try to trade in horses after dinner! Naturally Mr. Puffington is not pleased by all this, and when he reads the account of the run with his hounds he nearly has a fit; and he resolves to take to his bed till Sponge is well out of his house.

Here we take farewell of our hero; and I will say a few words on the way in which Surtees, in his sketches of country life, indicates his appreciation that a change is coming over the land. The Scamperdales, Jawleyfords, and the older families are disappearing and the new commercial and moneyed class is taking its place. Puffington and

men of his type are beginning to come to the front. It is getting more difficult to live on the land, as the older gentry had done; and estates are becoming rather a tax on a commercial fortune than the support of an aristocratic family. Surtees represents the old landowners as somewhat out at elbows, trying in vain to compete with the new men who are buying up their estates. In one of his novels we have a great Jewish magnate, Sir Moses Mainchance, who would have been practically impossible twenty years earlier. Sport changes with society. The railway has made country and town one, as a few hours bring all England within reach of London. Hunting is ceasing to be the old friendly and almost family institution, where the neighbourhood gathered at the meet, and everybody was known and welcomed. It was already becoming an affair for the rich from all parts of the world; and the Scamperdales in vain tried to scare

away the wealthy sportsman of the town by abusive language. The time was close at hand when his presence would be welcomed eagerly; and rural sport would be at an end.

We will now turn to another side of country life — namely, the social as portrayed by Anthony Trollope, who might also have been quoted as a writer on sport. Trollope, to my mind, has a real genius for interesting his readers in uninteresting people; because he describes so faithfully the characters one meets every day, gives their conversation exactly as they talked to one another, and exhibits them in the same commonplace attitude, in which we all are for the greater part of our lives. He wrote not by inspiration, when he felt in the mood, but regularly and systematically, turning out his novels, when he had leisure from his duties as a government official, at so many pages an hour. He says that he had little or no intimate

knowledge of cathedral society; yet, to one who has opportunity of observing it somewhat closely, his descriptions appear to have the accuracy of a photograph.

In Trollope's novels we have English life, especially well drawn; and though many scenes are laid in London, his characters always gravitate back to the country whence they derive their influence and prestige. It is not my intention to elaborate more than one side of this very versatile and copious writer. His political novels, for example, are well worth studying, especially "Phineas Finn." In "The Bertrams" we have an excellent picture of Oxford life in the opening chapter. Personal experience gave Trollope unusual insight into the characters of the government officials of his time. He was wonderfully quick at seizing on types hitherto unknown in English society who were gradually becoming forces in the world. Even as a writer on sport

he deserves a place. For what can be better than his description of the young, popular, able clergyman in "Framley Parsonage," whose very success leads him into some very difficult situations? I need not remind you, for I find he is widely read in this country, of his treatment of social gatherings in great houses like that of the Duke of Omniun. All I intend to do is to ask you to examine his clerical types and, perhaps, to offer some explanations which may be useful.

The state of things we read of in such books as "The Warden" and "Barchester Towers" has almost, but not quite, disappeared, and I confess that, although I think I understand it, I find a difficulty in making it clear to you. The initial problem is to explain why life in a cathedral city is often rural rather than town life. In the first place the word "city" in England used to be applied only to places where there was a cathedral. Ely, though still a town of some 8000 people, is al-

ways spoken of as a "city" and so are Llandaff and St. David's, which are little more than villages; and, till very recently, Liverpool and Birmingham were styled "towns." Leicester, with some 300,000 inhabitants, is still, I believe, technically a "town." The older cathedrals are in fact generally in small places which were once very important "cities," but have been outstripped by what then were little better than hamlets, but have long since become great centres of population. Such are Canterbury, Chichester, Salisbury, Wells, Ely, and Lichfield. Barchester was emphatically a country town, dominated by the landowners in the vicinity; and the clergy around it were a rural priesthood. The society which was centred in any cathedral was and still is unlike anything else in the world. In the middle ages a great cathedral, like Salisbury or Lincoln, was designed for a semi-monastic rather than congregational worship. It was served by a community of

priests, called "canons" because they observed a "canon," or rule of life. Joined with these was a veritable army of inferior priests, singers and ministers, all under the control of the dean, who presided over the cathedral, as the bishop over the diocese. This vast and splendid establishment was, at the Reformation under Queen Elizabeth, reduced to a limited number of canons, or prebendaries, minor canons, singing men and boys, vergers and bedesmen. As, however, under the new régime the services were little more than daily morning and evening prayer, the reduced staff had little or nothing to do. Accordingly the canons took turns to reside in the cathedral close and usually held benefices in other places. They married like other clergy; but were still, nominally, monastic persons attached to the cathedral. As time went on the estates of the chapters or colleges of the deans and canons became very valuable; and their positions were much

coveted as the prizes of the church. A cathedral chapter therefore was, as a rule, an aristocratic body, consisting of the dean nominated by the crown, and the canons, as a rule, by the bishop. Of course the bishops, in days when public opinion was not powerful, put their relatives into the canonries; and there were many ties between the various members of the cathedral bodies, who kept the rest of the world, and especially the inferior clergy, at a respectful distance.

With this attempt to explain the situation let me try to set forth some of the principal characters in "The Warden" and "Barchester Towers"; remembering that men are living under an order of things which was beginning to pass away.

First we have two charming characters in the Bishop and the Warden. Bishop Grantley is an aged man, a gentleman in the truest sense of the word; but a prelate who had

never perhaps in his life been particularly energetic, and was passing his later days in dignified ease. He is a little lonely, as very old men often are; and he does not comprehend the new age in which men have to fight to maintain their position and privileges; so he fails to understand his energetic son, who has married the Warden's daughter. His one friend is the Warden, a man, younger than himself, though elderly. The Warden holds one of those anomalous positions not uncommon in the church at that time. He is head of a hospital for old men, in receipt of a very comfortable income of £800 ($4000); and he is also the precentor, that is, leader of the music in the cathedral. He is a modest retiring man, an exquisite musician, and a kindly friend to the old men under his charge. Very different is the Bishop's son, Archdeacon Grantley. The Archdeacon is a strong man, determined to stand up for his rights, and what he believes to be the rights of his church.

He is thoroughly efficient, a vigorous administrator, a capable ruler of the rich parish over which he presides. He cannot understand his father's allowing things to drift, nor the placid piety of his father-in-law, the Warden. The two old men are terribly worried, and when they dine together they plot feebly how to resist the Archdeacon, but give way whenever he appears on the scene. But at last the crisis comes. The newspapers discover that the Warden is overpaid for his nominal work at the hospital, the old men, who are well lodged, fed, and cared for, are told that they ought to share in his stipend. A busy lawyer in the cathedral city takes up the case and the great London paper, the *Thunderer*, has leading articles denouncing the abuses of the church in general and the Warden's position in particular. Finally a novel appears with a thinly veiled attack on the administration of the Barchester Hospital for old men. Then the Warden shows him-

self to have all the firmness of a man, gentle by nature, but of the highest principles. He retires to a life of poverty rather than bear the reproach of being in a false position. The Archdeacon storms, accuses his father-in-law of culpable weakness in deserting his post, and the Bishop for allowing him to do so. And then the old Bishop rallies to his friend's support. Terribly afraid of his masterful son, he will not allow the Warden to be bullied out of doing what he thinks right. So the Warden leaves his comfortable house and takes apartments in the city, the Bishop gives him a tiny parish; and Mr. Harding, for that is the Warden's name, lives in honourable poverty, directing the cathedral music as precentor and ministering in his little church in the old city; and he and his old friend, the Bishop, have peace in their latter days. Thus we pass from "The Warden" to "Barchester Towers," and find old Dr. Grantley dying peacefully and his son,

the Archdeacon, hoping to succeed his father. Another man is, however, given the bishopric, and Trollope introduces his greatest characters, Bishop and Mrs. Proudie. The new Bishop is a fairly easy-going man, but his wife is determined to bring things in Barchester into order. Her régime has for its watchword efficiency. In it there is no room for kindly bishops and retiring scholars, like Mr. Harding. What is required is awakening preachers, zealous reformers, capable administrators. The old sleepy cathedral must become a centre of vigorous life and action, in which even clergy like Archdeacon Grantley, with their aristocratic notions, could have no place. Mrs. Proudie is herself a lady of high birth; but vulgar people have a good deal of influence over her, because they flatter her vanity. Accordingly she takes up with a clergyman named Slope, who lets her in for a good deal of trouble by his officiousness and want of

judgment and good feeling. But who am I, that in a brief lecture I should attempt to describe Mrs. Proudie? Let us turn to a very typical character in old cathedral life. Dr. Stanhope, one of the canons of Barchester, would be impossible now, but is easily conceived in the "fifties." I should say that he was the sort of man who had become a clergyman because his family was able to advance him; and had never had any real vocation for his calling. His wife and children were a great expense to him; and he had lived long abroad in order to retrench, getting his work done for him in England. His son was a thorough Bohemian, and his daughter had married an Italian nobleman, who had left her. Bishop Proudie had compelled Dr. Stanhope to return to his duties at Barchester; and the family were thoroughly out of place in a cathedral city with their foreign ideals and lax views of propriety. You have to picture the

decorous formality of Barchester society to realise the humour of Trollope's description of Bertie Stanhope and his sister the Signora. Throughout Trollope's novels there is the background of rural life; and especially that of the clergy. At times it is amusing, but often it is tragic; and, believe me, in those parsonage houses in the picturesque villages of England some veritable tragedies have been enacted. How many a clergyman and his wife have succumbed before the work of bringing up an enormous family on insufficient means! How many a man of high culture has found in the parish he entered with such high hopes the end of his career! How many have dreariness and isolation led to find relief in habits which have proved their ruin! The story of the rural clergy of England is the theme of many a novelist, from Fielding onwards; and there is generally a tone of sadness about it. And may I commend especially the writings of Charlotte

Young for perhaps the best description of the subject? Side by side with the comfortable dignitaries, who lived around the cathedrals, — the Grantleys, the Proudies, the Stanhopes, — were the Quiverfuls, with the crushing load of children innumerable, and Mr. Crawley, a famous scholar in his day, who had sunk amid the poverty of a wretched parish and the weight of utterly uncongenial surroundings.

One of the greatest changes in England that people of my age have seen is the complete shifting of influence from the country to the town. And this is peculiarly true of the clergy, who often belonged to the country families and shared in the ideas, tasks, and pursuits of their brothers. Now that our young clergy are recruited from a totally different class, they are perhaps more devoted to their profession but are unfortunately bred in towns rather than the country and often fail to understand the

people in the way their predecessors had done.

Even in my younger days the possession of land meant power and social prestige; and people really lived on it. But the change was coming rapidly; and the writers I have quoted show us the scene just before it was about to shift. Among all classes there has been a rush from the country to the towns; and there has been a growing tendency to regard rural England rather as a playground than as the source of the nation's best inhabitants. This tendency has unfortunately, in my judgment at least, been fostered by a legislation which has refused to give agriculture the encouragement it requires, with the result that our villages in England almost all tell the same tale of falling population. Perhaps one of the most urgent problems before our English statesmen is how to attract people back to the beautiful country, which under modern

economic conditions has been so much deserted.

I have now brought my lectures to an end. I have tried to place before you as vivid a picture as I could of English life in a bygone age; and if I have not made it adequate to the expectation of my auditors, I have at least a hope that I have aroused sufficient interest to make some here desire to know more of the subject. For the study of social life is, in truth, a most important branch of history. It is almost impossible to form a just conception of the men of any age from documents unless one can gain an idea what manner of men they really are. Unless we have this knowledge, no amount of research, no ingenuity or discrimination will assist us to arrive at an apprehension of the truth. For it is not possible to understand men's actions unless we have that sympathy which makes us realise that under different conditions they were human beings

not, after all, unlike what we ourselves should have been in their circumstances. And it is in the novel, the private letter, the caricature, the half-forgotten jest or good story, that we are helped to depict the men and women of the past.

A pleasing task awaits me; namely, to thank you for the welcome you have given me as a stranger, when I first appeared before you, for the patience you have shown in listening to what I had to say, for the evident sympathy and good feeling you have shown throughout these lectures. Let me say that I felt deeply the honour conferred on me by the offer of a Lowell lectureship, that I enjoyed, in these days of great sorrow and anxiety shared by all my countrymen, the distraction which I found in preparing for my responsible task; and that though, I confess, I first entered this room with no little trepidation and wondered how I could possibly interest complete strangers,

I now feel that I am speaking to friends, who have, by their kindness to an Englishman with whose very name they must have been unfamiliar, demonstrated the reality of the ties which bind the two Englands, the old and the new, each to the other.

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Printed in the United States of America.